

THE
COUNCIL OF
EPHESUS OF
431

MAR APREM

1978




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COUNCIL OF EPHESUS OF 431

M A R A P R E M

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by

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B. D., M. Th., S. T. M., D. Th.

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to Examine the Relevance of the Christology
of the Church of the East**

**A thesis submitted to the Senate of Serampore
College as a partial fulfilment of
the requirements of the Degree
of Master of Theology**

George Davis Mookan

**United Theological College
Bangalore**

1966

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The Senate of Serampore**

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PREFACE

This book was written more than twelve years ago. Dr. Kaaj Baago, the then professor of Church History at the United Theological College, Bangalore, suggested that it might be published. I postponed the publication hoping that I would be able to read more on the subject and later to publish a well documented study. Nevertheless, as per the advice of Professor Baago I wrote a summary of this thesis and published it in the **Bangalore Theological Forum** in 1967 under the title "A Re appraisal of Nestorianism."

Since then I did further research on the Christology of Nestorius in New York and Princeton and it has been discussed in detail in my doctoral dissertation. However, much of the historical background brought out in the following pages of this book has not been discussed in the doctoral dissertation. Hence the publication of this book became a necessity. This will supplement some of the theological discussions in the doctoral dissertation which will be published in the near future under the title "Nestorian Christology."

In this M. Th. thesis, several words have been written in Syriac and Greek. As it is difficult to get Greek printing types, the Greek words are transliterated during printing. Although Syriac types are available, they too are transliterated realising that most of the readers of this book will not be able to read it in that language.

In 1976 when Mar Narsai Press reached the fiftieth year of its inception, the Managing Committee decided to celebrate its golden Jubilee in a fitting manner by publish-

ing a series of books in English about the history, faith and worship of the Church of the East. The literary development of the Church was the original intention of the founding fathers of Mar Narsai Press in 1926. It has published several books in Syriac, Malayalam and English during its fifty years of service.

The first two numbers of the golden Jubilee publications, **The Nestorian Fathers** and **Nestorian Missions** came out in 1976 itself. The third number **The Chaldean Syrian Church in India** was published in 1977. This book is the fourth in that series. The fifth one, which is on the Sacraments is already in the Press. I hope that the Golden Jubilee series of Mar Narsai Press will be able to explain the history, faith and worship of the ancient Church of the East to the people in India and abroad.

I am grateful to the Senate of Serampore College for granting permission to print this M. Th thesis of mine submitted to the Serampore Senate in 1966.

Metropolitan's Palace

MAR APREM

Trichur - 680001

30 April 1978

INTRODUCTION

A. AIM

The following work is an unbiased probe into the history and background of what is known as the third ecumenical council of the universal church held at Ephesus in 431 A. D. The purpose is to examine and evaluate the christology of the Church of the East, tracing its historical development to the present day. Attempt has been made to test the relevance of the 'Nestorian' christology to the contemporary thought in the context of its relation to the other churches, thereby determining its right to claim a place among the orthodox.

B. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

All those who are engaged in the great task of burying the heresies should, naturally, refrain from an attempt such as the one which the present writer proposes to do. Modern scholarship, however, has questioned the propriety of calling Nestorius a Nestorian. John Stewart, in his scholarly book entitled *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise*, protests strongly against calling the Nestorians, schismatics. The personal and theological battles around the unhappy Council of Ephesus of 431 A. D. were recorded in the pages of history.

The discovery of the *Bazar of Heracleides* has widened the scope of our study on Nestorius and his teachings. The most unbiased approach in the inquiry as to a person's teaching and character is, undoubtedly, the sincere attempt to let that person's works and deeds disclose himself. Nestorius is being attacked, too often, with a set of precon-

ceived notions and pre-arranged questions. With the help of this work of Nestorius, the present writer hopes to have done justice to this theologian condemned under strange circumstances.

C. PREVIOUS RESEARCH IN THE FIELD

In doing so the writer naturally, has received such information and inspiration from the more recent literature on the subject and he wishes, in particular, to acknowledge his debt to authors like: Hefele, Kidd, Duchesne, Badger, Bethune Baker, Loofs, Vine, Wigram etc.

The main limitation in the field of previous research is the fact that those who are called Nestorians have not written any theological work on Nestorius. All their theological works are in Syriac. The only book written in English is historical by nature. The author, V. K. George, is a historian rather than a theologian. Moreover, his inability to understand both Syriac and Greek languages is a serious defect. Nevertheless, his work is quoted in this essay, because it tries – with success to a great extent – to put forward the reactions of one who confesses the doctrine of our present study.

D. DEFINITIONS.

(i) COUNCIL OF EPHESUS

The Council of 431 A.D. is numbered as the third ecumenical council of the universal church. But the Church of the East has questioned the universal claim of this council. As for the procedure of the council of Ephesus, facts and figures are quoted from the primary sources in order to

arrive at a conclusion concerning the fairness of the Council of Ephesus, which the Church of the East, even today considers to be a 'Robber Synod', in the same fashion as the Roman Church calls the Council of Ephesus of 449 A.D., a *Latrocinium*. As this is an objective study of the sources the councils of Ephesus in 431, are treated as the rival synods, for the reasons given later.

(ii) CHURCH OF THE EAST

This church is known by various names such as Chaldean Syrian Church (only in India, as the Chaldeans in the Middle East are the Uniat Christians), Babylonian Church (reminiscent of the ancient Babylonian empire), Assyrian Church (as known among the Anglicans,) East Syrian Church (to distinguish this church from the West Syrians who are labelled as the Monophysites), and the Persian Church (as this church flourished in the Persian Empire), in addition to the most popular name, rather nickname, the Nestorian Church. The present writer, however intends to use the official title i. e., the Church of the East: though it is not so familiar to all the students of Church history as the name Nestorian Church. Hence, occasionally this popular title is also used, as this title is not without honour in history, due to her missionary work in China, Turkestan, India, Ceylon etc.

E. METHOD OF THIS STUDY

This study is a scientific and sincere probe into the history and background of the whole controversy. It is also a re-examination of the documents with the purpose of evaluating the relevance of the christology which the Church of the East thinks to be rational and believes to be apostolic. However, this work is not a defence of heresy

written by a heretic for the benefit of heretics giving undue reverence to an ancient heretic!

The East Syrian theologians are quoted here to speak for the christology of the Church of the East. Many students of history are ignorant of the christology of this Church just because most of the writings of their theologians still remain in the Syriac language.

Even the translations that are published have gone out of print. Due to the limitation of space in this essay only selected theologians of the 'Church of the East' are called in to give evidence in support of the thesis, which is put forward in the following pages.

For most of the information concerning the attempts for inter-communion between the Church of the East and the Church of England, the writer wishes to express his gratitude to the authorities of the Lambeth Palace Library of the Archbishop of Canterbury for the kind permission granted to the writer to go through the Assyrian file in the archives and read the correspondence on this subject. The writer is also grateful to many librarians and other friends in India and abroad for their unfailing courtesy in helping him to make this study as up to date as possible.

I

BACKGROUND OF THE COUNCIL

A. ALEXANDRIA VERSUS ANTIOCH

In addition to the personal and ecclesiastical rivalries, the emphases of the two schools of thought, Antioch and Alexandria, played an important role in the Nestorian controversy. The school of Antioch followed Aristotle and that of Alexandria based its thinking on Plato. Adolf Harnack, writes that the Antiochene theologians were “distinguished by methodical study of Scripture, sober thinking in imitation of Aristotle, and the strictest asceticism.”¹

Both the schools were contending for the same fundamental christian truths and R. V. Sellers states that “one is the complement of the other.”²

(i) THE ALEXANDRIAN CHRISTOLOGY

Alexandria, where the philosopher Philo flourished, was a centre of Greek culture and learning. Clement (d. before 215) and Origen (185 - 254), the most influential

1 Adolf Harnack; *History of Dogma*, Vol. IV, English translation, Holland: Williams & Norgate, 1898. P. 165

2 R. V. Sellers; *Two Ancient Christologies*, London: S. P. C. K., 1954, p. 257

heads of the school of Alexandria, were Greeks. Clement taught that God is “the one, indivisible, without dimensions and limit, without form and name,”³ He also taught that Jesus Christ was at once both God and man; “the Logos Himself is the manifest mystery—God in man, and man in God; the Mediator is the Logos, who is common to both (*Koinos amphion*).”⁴

Origen was the first to speak of Jesus Christ as ‘the God-Man.’ Origen upheld the principle of the “two natures” to safeguard faith against docetic ideas. In *de Principiis*, Origen writes;

Therefore is the spectacle to be contemplated (*contemplandum est*) with all fear and reverence, that the reality of each nature in one and the same Person may be demonstrated; so that nothing unworthy and unbecoming may be perceived in that divine and ineffable ousia, nor again the things done be considered as illusions of imaginary appearances.⁵

Origen safeguarded the doctrine of the reality of the two natures and their difference in the union,⁶ and thus made a valuable contribution to sound christological thought.

3 Stromateis; v: 10, 12; vii:1: (quoted from Sellers; *op. cit*; p, 3)

4 Ibid; vii: 17 (quoted from Sellers; *op.cit*; p,19)

5 *de Principiis*; II. vi:2. (quoted from Sellers; *op. cit*; p. 25)

6 Cf. Sellers: *op. cit*; p. 26

Athanasius (296 – 373) was a significant representative of the School of Alexandria. He emphasised the unity of the Person of Jesus Christ.⁷ All the actions and sayings of Jesus Christ which are recorded in the Scripture, Athanasius teaches, are those of the Logos made man.⁸ Like his predecessor Origen, Athanasius uses the title Theotokos when speaking of the Virgin.⁹ Athanasius had no difficulty to say “God suffered”, appealing to the witness of the blessed Peter.¹⁰

The aspects of Athanasius’ teaching, according to Sellers, may be called “the first foundation principle of the Alexandrine Christology.”¹¹ Athanasius further denounces the notion that the body of Jesus Christ is “homousios” with the Godhead of the Logos. The firm stand of Athanasius on the reality of the manhood of Jesus Christ condemned Eutychianism in anticipation.

Apollinarius of Laodicea (310 - 390) was another noteworthy representative of the School of Alexandria. His main interest was soteriology. But he could not accept the idea that Logos had been changed into flesh. He quoted the words from Scripture “I am the Lord, I change not.”¹² and insisted that Logos was the same person before and after the Incarnation.

The Logos becoming flesh, according to Apollinaris, is ‘unification’ (*enosis*), ‘Composition’ (*synthesis*),

7 **C. Arian**; iii: 38 (quoted from Sellers; **op. cit**; 35)

8 Cf. Sellers; **op. cit**; p. 38

9 **C. Arian**; iii; 14, 29, 33 quoted from Sellers; **op. cit**; p. 39)

10 I Peter; iv: 1

11 Sellers; **op. cit**; p. 40

12 Malachi; iii:6

‘coming together’ (*sunodos*), ‘commingling’ (*Krasis, anakrasis, sugkrasis*), of god head and flesh in the person of the Logos. About the union of two natures, Apollinarius called it, ‘personal union’: anticipating the hypostatic union of Cyril. He also used the title Theotokos.

The Cappadocian Fathers¹⁴ built up their christology upon the ideas concerning God and man as well as man’s redemption. They rejected the view of Apollinarius which denies the place of human mind in Christ. Harnack rightly points to the influence of Origen on Gregory of Nazianzus.¹⁵

(ii) THE ANTIOCHENE CHRISTOLOGY

Paul of Samosata, Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia are the most important exponents of the christology of the school of Antioch. We can trace the teachings of Nestorius to Theodore and Diodore, whose teaching again can be traced back to Paul of Samosata.

DIODORE OF TARSUS¹⁶

Unfortunately, Diodore’s books have been destroyed, as he was suspected of Nestorianism after his death. During

13 Sellers; **op.cit**; p. 52. These expressions had been used by Origen and other Alexandrines,

14 Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil of Caesarea and his brother Gregory of Nyssa.

15 Harnack; **op.cit**; pp, 160 - 163. Footnote,

16 Diodore, a native of Antioch, was educated at Athens. He became the head of the monastery near Antioch where he taught Chrysostom and Theodore. In 378 he became the Bishop of Tarsus. He participated in the Council of Antioch (379 A. D.) and the Council of Constantinople (381 A. D.)

his life time, however, Diodore was respected as the defender of faith and protector of the Church from the two dangers of the 4th century, i. e., Arianism and Apollinarianism. The Orthodoxy of Diodore was evident from the fact that the Emperor Theodosius I, in a decree dated 30th July, 381, had named Diodore as one of the Orthodox Eastern prelates, communion with whom was the test of Orthodoxy. It seems rather an irony of fate that the champion of the doctrines of the first two ecumenical councils was considered posthumously as the originator of the doctrine :condemned in the so-called third ecumenical council.

From Sozomen¹⁷ we know that Diodore was opposed to allegory and insisted on the complete humanity of Christ over against the Apollinarian teaching. He also attacked the school of Alexandria. In his work **Contra Synousiastas**, Diodore says:

The divine Logos did not undergo two births.
one before the ages, the other in these last
days.....
In any discussion concerning the births
according to nature, it must not be thought
that the divine Logos is Son of Mary. ¹⁸

Thus, Diodore opposed any idea suggesting that the divine nature of Christ had its beginning from the Virgin. He insisted that the divine Logos did not experience a human birth.

17 Sozomen; **A History of the Church**, English translation, London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1846. p. 376.

18 A fragment of this work is preserved by Leontius of Byzantium in his **C. Nestor. et. Eutychn.**, P. G. Ixxxvi. 1388.B (Cf. Sellers; **op. cit**; p. 174)

THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA.¹⁹

The second great Antiochene theologian, Theodore of Mopsuestia (350 - 428), surpassed his master Diodore of Tarsus in learning. Though Theodore died during the year of the outbreak of the Nestorian controversy, i. e., 428 A. D., our understanding of Nestorianism, as well as of the school of Antioch, will be poorer without a discussion on the christology of Theodore.

He too, like his teacher and predecessor, was greatly respected in his life time. In "The Lives of Illustrious Men", Gennadius states that Theodore was "a cautious investigator and clever of tongue." ^o According to the same source, Theodore wrote against Apollinarians and Anomians.²¹ Theodores of Cyrus, the church historian, paints him in beautiful colour stating that he fought against 'the forces of Arius and Eunomius, struggling against the piratical band of Apollinarius, and finding the best pastures

19 Theodore was born at Antioch (c. 350), in a wealthy and influential family. With Chrysostom and Maximus (afterwards bishop of Isaurian Seleucia), he used to attend the lectures of the Sophist Libanus at Antioch and later in the monastic school of Diodore till their teacher became the bishop of Tarsus in 378. Theodore was made the Bishop of Mopsuestia in 392 A. D. and worked there for thirty six years.

20 Gennadius; **De Viris Illustribus**. Ch. XII.

Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Library,

Second Series, Vol. III, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956, p. 388.

21 Anomians are the extreme Arians of the 4th century, so called from their doctrine that the Son was totally unlike (**anomoios**) the Father. Their leaders were Aetius and Eunomius (F. L. Cross (ed)), **The Oxford Dictionary of Christian Church**, London: Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 58.

for God's sheep.²² His influence in the East was great; or, one often heard the cry: We believe as Theodore believed; long live the faith of Theodore.²³

Nevertheless, in 553 A. D., he was branded as a terrible heretic, when the 'Three Chapters' were condemned in the Second Council of Constantinople. Mingana describes this event in the following terms:

Given free rein the outbursts of the Cyrillian Bishops of the Council knew no bounds. Expressions such as "impious", "blasphemous", "heretical", were continuously hurled against a man dead one hundred and twenty years previously.²⁴

In his *Commentary on the Nicene Creed*, we have a fairly good account of his christology. He deals with the economy of the humanity of our Lord in the following words:

And in order to show us how He came down they said: *And be came a man*. He did not humble Himself here by an ordinary act of providence nor by the gift of the assistance of (Divine) power that He had in the same way as he performed many other things, but he assumed and put on our nature in which He was, and in which dwelt so that He

22 Theodoret; *Ecclesiastical History*, Ch. XXXIX, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Library*, Second Series, vol. II, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956, p. 159.

23 A. Mingana; ***Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed***, Woodbrooke Studies, Vol. V, Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons. Ltd., 1932, p. 3.

24 *Ibid*; p. 6

might perfect it with suffering and unite it to Him. In this they (our blessed Fathers) showed us the gift of His grace which he assumed a man from us, was in Him, and they taught us that He endured and bore all according to human nature so that we might understand that he was not a man in appearance only, but that He was a real man who suffered all the human (passions) according to human nature, ²⁵

In his main theological work, *On the Incarnation of the Lord*²⁶, Theodore repudiated the charge that God dwelt in Christ as He dwelt in apostles and righteous men:

In Him towards whom He showed His good pleasure He dwelt as in a Son (*hos en huio*) that is to say, He united the Man assumed entirely to himself, and fitted Him to share with Him in all the honour which He, the indweller, who is Son by nature possesses.²⁷

Theodore's teaching on the christology depended upon his teaching on anthropology. His main desire had been to provide for a free moral development in the Saviour's manhood and to preclude the errors of the Apollinarianism. In his baptismal creed Theodore says: "..... Jesus Christ.....who because of us men and because of our salvation came down from heaven and was Incarnate and became man....." ²⁸

25 **Ibid**; p. 73

26 This work, in 15 books consisting of 15,000 verses was styled as **Against the Incarnation** by an ecclesiastical opponent, a century later.

27 **De. Incarn**, VII. [quoted from Sellers; **op. cit**; p. 133)

28 Cf. J. N. D. Kelley; **Early Christian Creeds**, London: Longmans, 1960, pp. 187-8.

Theodore taught the perfectly divine and human Christ, emphasising the two distinct natures in one person. He was accused as being a Pelagian by Marius Mercator.²⁹ The christology of Theodore attempted to provide for a free moral development in the Saviour's manhood and to preclude the errors of Apollinarianism. His use of the word 'conjunction' (*sunap'heia*) has remained, and still remains, the bone of contention.

B. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

Cyril, nephew of Theophilus of Alexandria, was born in Alexandria, and learned theology under the monastic discipline of the Egyptian desert. While spending his five years among the monks of Nitria, he had the help and counsel of the famous abbot, Isidore of Pelusium. Cyril, however, could not find satisfaction in the life of monastic discipline of meditation and prayers.³⁰

Cyril was summoned from the desert by his uncle Theophilus, who ordained him as a priest. We do not have any information about his career as a priest. We could reasonably guess that he must have assisted his uncle from whom he learned the "ecclesiastical politics"; the knowledge of which guided his future career. Cyril was present in the Synod of Oak in the year 403, which condemned Chrysostom.

The participation of Cyril in the Synod of Oak, writes a German historian, determined Cyril's future career.³¹ He was ever opposed to Chrysostom. When all the churches reinserted the name of Chrysostom in the eucharistic prayer, Cyril refused to do it, because "to

29 Mingana; *op. cit*; p.5

30 **Dictionary of Christian Biography & Literature**; (eds) H. Wace & W. C. Percy; London: John Murray, 1911, p. 236

31 Hans Von Campenhausen; **The Fathers of the Greek Church**. (tr.) Stanley Godman, New York: Pantheon, 1959, p. 146

restore Chrysostom would be like putting Judas back in the Apostolic College.³²

In 412 A. D. Cyril became the Patriarch of Alexandria after a tumultuous contest with Archdeacon Timothy, three days after the death of his uncle and predecessor Theophilus.³³ The early years of his administrations were marked by many acts of violence and troubles in Alexandria. He opened warfare with Novatianism, Neoplatonism, the Jews etc. The unruly crowd of the monks of Nitria, who always supported their old fellow-monk, without any regard to the merit of each case, is responsible for many such acts of violence. Many modern students of history, however find it difficult to acquit this "doctor of the universal church" of such crimes."³⁴

32 L. Duchesne; **Early History of the Christian Church**, Vol. III (tr.) Claude Jenkins, London: John Murray, 1924. p. 211

33 "A Pharaoh succeeds a Pharaoh", was the comment of some when Dioscorus succeeded Cyril in 444 A. D. This was equally true, if not more, when Cyril became the Patriarch of Alexandria.

34 Cyril canonised the monk, who was hit with a stone and killed, while attacking the prefect Orestes. Canonisation of a violent monk as a martyr, gave the impression to the people of Alexandria that Cyril was a party in such acts of violence. When the Christians in Alexandria took possession of the synagogues and persecuted the Jews, Cyril himself was leading this violent crowd. When this matter was reported to Emperor Theodosius II, Cyril was forced to pacify the prefect Orestes, but to no use. One author remarks, "Cyril extended to him, as a form of solemn appeal, the book of the Gospels, it might well have occurred to Orestes that the Archbishop had forgotten some of its precepts when he in person led a multitude of Christian zealots to revenge one violence by another" (Dictionary of Christian Biography and Literature, **op. cit.**; p. 236.)

The murder of "Hypatia" is a great crime for which Cyril is still held responsible, though it is a fact that it was not Cyril, but one of his clergy, a reader named Peter, who murdered this beautiful female philosopher, who had earned great reputation in her time in Alexandria. Socrates, the contemporary historian, describes this most hideous crime as follows:

Some of them therefore hurried away by a fierce and bigoted zeal, whose ringleader was a reader named Peter, waylaid her returning home, and dragging her from her carriage, they took her to the church called **Caesareum**, where they stripped her and then murdered her with tiles. After tearing her body in pieces, they took her mangled limbs to a place called Cinaron, and there burnt them.³⁵

35 Socrates; **The Ecclesiastical History**; English translation revised by A. C. Zenos; N. P. N, F. Series II, Vol. II, p. 160

The estimate of this cruel act is given by various historians in different ways. Socrates himself informs us "that this affair brought not the least approbium, not only upon Cyril but also up on the whole Alexandrian Church." "The turbulent and furious **parabolani** and others who shed Hypatia's blood at the foot of the altar," writes Canon Bright, "were only 'bettering the instruction' which had let them loose upon the synagogues" (Dict. Chr. Biography; **op. cit**; p. 237) The second estimate of this event is by the supporters of Cyril who think that Cyril was neither directly nor indirectly responsible for this murder. A third estimate is that of Edward Gibbon who holds Cyril responsible.

Whatever be the merit of the case, Cyril's name has paid dearly for the error and as Canon Bright points out "the great doctrinal cause which he upheld so stoutly in after-years has suffered for the faults of his earlier life." 36

Cyril must have spent some uneventful years at Alexandria till the controversy with Nestorius began. After the murder of Hypatia in March 415. we hear of Cyril in 417 A. D; When he was urged by his friend Isidore of Pelusium to re-instate the memory of Chrysostom. Though nothing is known about the occupation of Cyril, for the period 417-428, it is supposed that he reigned as the strong man of Alexandria, in ecclesiastical as well as economic spheres. 37

In his paschal homily for 421 A. D., Cyril made an attack on those who divided the one Christ. The core of Cyril's christological position in all its essentials was formed at this time as expressed in the above mentioned homily. Though Nestorius had not come into any prominence during this period, this was an attack on the Antiochene Christology. Though some scholars argue that Cyril's commentary on St. John was written after 428 A. D, because of the anti-Antiochene passages found in it, the present writer along with more recent scholars thinks that it was written before 428, because the word 'Theotokos' is not seen there.

36 **Dict. Chri. Biography**; p. 237.

37 A German historian observes, "His political authority was as unassailable in Egypt as was his economic power as Lord of the corn fleets and the estates of the Coptic interior. The monks whom he visited, kept posted with circular letters, and tried to shackle to himself, formed his strongest spiritual army." (Campenhausen; **op.cit**; . 148)

Cyril's character remains, among the students of history a matter of dispute.³⁸ His writings, however, reflect the qualities of a good and systematic theologian. His abilities, such as the precision in exposition, accuracy in thought, skill in reasoning, are evident in his writings and sermons. He is considered as the most brilliant representative of the Alexandrian Christology. He developed the teachings of Athanasius and the Cappadocian Fathers into the classical Greek doctrines on Trinity and Incarnation.

38 According to S. Herbert Scott, both friend and foe confess the exceeding influence of Cyril. He asserts that, apart from Athanasius, Cyril has exercised the greatest influence on ecclesiastical doctrine. He argues that "the estimate of a good many people of Cyril's character is the fancy one supplied to them ready-made by Kingsley's fiction *Hypatia*. The best corrective to that is to read Cyril's writings – a man is best known by them." (S. Herbert Scott; **The Eastern Churches and the papacy**, London: Sheed & Ward, 1928, pp. 145–6, footnote) Campenhausen, whose estimate of Cyril is not "the fancy one supplied to them ready-made by Kingsley's fiction *Hypatia*", attacks Cyril because of the bribery and other fowl methods employed in the Nestorian controversy (Campenhausen; **op. cit**; p. 152) Dean Stanley gives the lie to the comparison made between Athanasius and Cyril. He cannot understand how Cyril who placed himself "at the head of bands of ferocious ruffians" can be compared to the saintly Athanasius (A. P. Stanley; **Lectures on the history of The Eastern Church**; London: John Murray, third edition, 1864, p. 247.)

His writings are a large collection of letters, including 29 Paschal homilies, many exegetical books such as the Commentaries on John, Luke, and on the selected passages of Pentateuch, several treatises on dogmatic theology, an Apology against Julian the Apostate, and a collection of his sermons.

The ethical conception of man's redemption is upheld by Cyril. The terms "incorruptibility", "immutability" and "immortality" occur again and again in Cyril's writings. In his Commentary on St. John, Cyril writes "Christ is the Mediator through whom and in whom man knows the Father, and is made one with Him."^{38 a}

In his christology Cyril insisted that the Incarnation did not involve any change in regard to the Logos. He taught the "One Incarnate nature" after the Incarnation, a phrase which he believed to be Athanasian, though it was only an Apollinarian forgery ascribed to Athanasius.³⁹ He maintains that Logos is the same person before and after Incarnation. The only difference is that the Logos has become Incarnate. The Union of Godhead and manhood in Jesus Christ is "Hypostatic" and natural.⁴⁰

38a **Commim Jo Ev.** X:7 ed Pusey IV: p. 212 (quoted) from Sellers; **op. cit**; p. 83)

39 Even V. C. Samuel, who is a strong supporter of Cyril, has accepted the truth of this statement "provisionally." (**Greek Orthodox Theological Review**; Vol. X. No. 2, winter 1964-65, **One Incarnate Nature of God the Word**, p. 37)

40 For this teaching, Cyril is accused as an Apollinarian.

One modern authority on the Council of Chalcedon laments the fact that "no modern scholar has undertaken a comprehensive study of Cyril's theology."⁴¹ As the primary concern of this work is the christology of the Church of the East in the light of the Council of Ephesus, space will not permit to make "a comprehensive study of Cyril's theology." The pertinent points of the christology of Cyril,⁴² however, were mentioned here in order to give insight to the christological issue at Ephesus.

41 V. C. Samuel; **Some Facts About the Alexandrine Christology**; The Indian Journal of Theology, Vol. II. No. 4, 1962, p. 141.

42 Campenhausen writes that in the light of the later dogmatic formulations the Christology of Cyril was quite inaccurate and Monophysite. According to him, the trouble with Cyril is that, he "never doubted that belief in Christ could be rightly professed and defended only in the way to which he was accustomed." (Campenhausen; **op. cit**; p. 148) Even if Cyril is a good theologian, many modern scholars question the traditional title of a "saint". Dr. Pittenger writes, "St Cyril of Alexandria – saint, certainly, only by his traditional title . . ." (W. N. Pittenger; **The Word Incarnate**, New York; Harper & Brothers, 1959, p. 7) Cyril had never understood the maxim of Athanasius that "the duty of Orthodoxy is not to compel but to persuade belief." Concerning his death we have a letter purported to have been written by Theodoret of Cyrus, though the genuineness of this letter has been questioned. The letter reads: "At last and with difficulty the villain has gone. The good and the gentle pass away all too soon; the bad prolong their life for years..... His survivors are indeed delighted at this departure. The dead, may be, are sorry. There is some ground of alarmGreat care must be taken to tell the guild of undertakers to lay a very big and heavy stone upon his grave, for fear he should come back again, and show his changeable mind once more." (Theodoret; letter No. 180, N. P. N. F, Vol. III, pp. 346 – 347)

C. JOHN NESTORIUS

Nestorius was a native of Germanicia, a city in Syria, at the foot of Mount Taurus. He was brought up and educated at Antioch. So in lineage and tradition he was an Antiochene. He became a monk at the monastery of Euprepus, near Antioch, and was famous for his eloquence as a preacher, and according to some for the austerity of his life. ⁴³

His reputation reached far beyond the Antiochene Patriarchate. When the Patriarchate in Constantinople became vacant in December 427, Emperor Theodosius II appointed Nestorius whom the people thought to be a second Chrysostom from Antioch because of his orthodoxy, erudition and eloquence. The Emperor states:

Him I sent for and took by causing sorrow to his whole city and I brought him hither for your advantage. ⁴⁴

Socrates, the church historian, is not favourable to Nestorius. He quotes the first sermon of Nestorius to suggest that Nestorius was arrogant and self-conceited. At any rate, as Socrates himself informs us, many people appreciated this brave enthusiast who attempted to remove all sorts of heresies from the Church.

At the time of his consecration as the Patriarch of Constantinople on 10th April, 428, Nestorius addressed the Emperor in the following famous words:

43 Socrates; **op. cit.** p. 169 See also A. J. Maclean; **Nestorianism, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics**, Vol. IX, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917, p. 324.

44 J. F. Bethune Baker; **Nestorius and His Teachings** Cambridge: University Press, 1908, p. 6

Give me, my prince, the earth purged of heretics, and I will give you heaven as a recompense. Assist me in destroying heretics, and I will assist you in vanquishing the Persians. ⁴⁵

Socrates paints the picture of Nestorius as a furious persecutor of heresies. He blames him for the unrest in the city while taking actions against the heretics and thinks that the later calamities that fell upon Nestorius were only a just reward of his actions against heretics.⁴⁶

As we see it, however, it was his fervent spirit for the cause of the church which prompted him to suppress Arians and Apollinarians. Nestorius got the police to close the Arian chapel, as it was against the law to have a chapel for the Arians in the city. The Arians, however, replied it by setting it on fire with the result that the neighbouring part of the city was burnt down. He also persecuted the Novations,⁴⁷ Quartodecimans ⁴⁸ and the Macedon-

45 Socrates; **op. cit**; p. 169

46 Evagrius, the church historian of the 6th century, is more anti-Nestorian than Socrates, on whose authority his information rests. He writes: "Since, then, Nestorius, that God – assaulting tongue, that second conclave of Caiaphas, that workshop of blasphemy, in whose case Christ is again made a subject of bargain and sale by having His natures divided and torn-asunder"..... (Evagrius: **Ecclesiastical History**, Book I. Chapter II, (Eng. Tr.), London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1846, p.4.

47 Novatianism is a rigorist schism in the western church which arose out of the Decian persecution (249 – 250 A. D.) Novatian was their leader.

48 Quartodecimans are those who insisted on the celebration of Easter on 14th Nisan.

ians.⁴⁹ The fashion of his day was to crush the heretics for the preservation of faith. As an inheriter of the theology of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus, Nestorius could not keep quiet and allow the continuance of the condemned heresies such as Arianism and Apollinarianism. As for the violence in such occasions, it was unfortunate. But when the church, backed by the by imperial power, began to act, such violence was unavoidable. We should also remember, as V. K. George points out, that while taking severe steps against the heretics; he also took great care to instruct his people in the orthodox doctrines of the church.⁵⁰

The over – enthusiasm of Nestorius in overthrowing the heretics created many enemies who later worked against him at the time of the Council of Ephesus in 431 A. D. As far as Nestorius was concerned, he was doing his duty. A writer comments:

49 Schism caused by Macedonius, (d. c. 362), Bishop of Constantinople, who supported the Semi-Arian cause. There is a reason for Nestorius to take action against this sect. The Bishop of Germa, on the Hellespont, had treated them with such severity that, driven to desperation, they had sent two assassins to murder him. For this rash act they were punished. (**Dict. Chr. Biography; op. cit; p. 753**)

50 V. K. George; **The Holy Apostolic & Catholic Church of the East And Mar Nestorius**, Ernakulam: Mar Thimotheus Memorial Printing & Publishing House, 1960, p. 17

Nestorius seems to be an ardent devotee of the church, who did not wish that the purity of the church should be polluted by false doctrines. ⁵¹

However, there were also other causes of the downfall of Nestorius. One was the enmity with Pelagians- Another was the jealousy of Cyril of Alexandria against the growing influence of the See of Constantinople. Last but not the least, his disfavour with the ladies of the court, proved to be rather fateful. Though he had the support of Emperor Theodosius II, at the early part of the controversy, he could not get any support from the royal ladies ⁵²

Nestorius was not well versed in the art of bribing, (in other words, sending blessings and presents) as was his rival Cyril. The latter brought the church in Alexandria into great debt in distributing lavish presents to the eunuchs and ladies of the Imperial household,—all part of his campaign against Nestorius. At the same time he pretended to be a friend of Nestorius and wrote to their mutual friend⁵³ “Let but the faith be guaranteed, and no one shall prove a truer friend to Nestorius than I.”⁵⁴

51 *Ibid.* p. 16

52 A writer observes, “Nestorius had somehow incurred the enmity of Pulcheria. This cause is too deeply buried in the dirt of court scandal to be disinterred. Eudocia, though she is often in opposition to her sister - in - law, does not seem to have had any leanings to the party of Nestorius...” (A. Gardiner; the **Cambridge Medieval History** Vol I, Ch. XVII, Cambridge University Press, 1925, p.495.)

53 Supposed to be Acacius, Metropolitan of Miletene in Armenia II.

54 B. J. Kidd; **History of the Church**. Vol. III, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922, p. 215

Finally it should be noted, that Nestorius failed to win the friendship of Memnon, the bishop of Ephesus, who played an important role at the Council in 431. The Report which the supporters of Nestorius sent to the Emperor says:

But Cyril of Alexandria, a man, it would seem, born and bred for the bane of the churches, after taking into partnership the audacity of Memnon of Ephesus, has first of all transgressed against your quieting and pious decree; and has so showed his general depravity,⁵⁵

Concerning his christology we shall consider it later in this essay.⁵⁶ A. R. Vine testifies that "Nestorius was genuinely confident of the orthodoxy, logic and coherence of his argument."⁵⁷ Leonard Hodgson supports this and especially drawn attention to the consistency in Nestorius' thinking:

Nestorius has been called a confused thinker, but careful study of the **Bazaar of Heracleides** makes it clear that, whatever he was, he was certainly not that. His few points are repeated again and again with monotonous consistency.⁵⁸

The greatness of Nestorius is evident from his decision to withdraw voluntarily from his bishopric rather than split the church, after the controversy at Ephesus in 431. As his last words show, he never wanted, to work for his own glory, but for God's:

My dearest desire is that God should be blessed in heaven and upon earth. As for Nestorius let him remain

55 Theodoret; Letter No. CL. VII; **op.cit**; p. 334

56 See Chapter V. C, of this essay.

57 A. R. Vine; **An Approach to Christology**, London; Independent Press, 1948, p. 35

58 G. R. Driver & L. Hodgson; **Bazaar of Heracleides of Nestorius** (Eng. Tr.) Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925; p. XXXV

anathema. God grant that while cursing me men may reconcile themselves with Him. 59

He died about 451 A. D. in his exile in a great Oasis in Egypt. Before his death, in spite of all the evils done to him, he wrote in the last paragraph of his book *Βαζααρ of Heracleides*, as follows:

Rejoice for me, O desert, my beloved and my foster – parent and the home of my habitation, and my mother the land of my exile, who even after my death will guard my body unto the resurrection by the will of God. Amen. 60

59 H. Pakenham-Walsh; **Lights And Shades of Christendom**, Vol. I, Mysore: S. P. C. K. & C. L. S. 1955, p. 213.

60 **Bazaar of Heracleides**; op. cit; pp.379 – 380.

II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONTROVERSY

A. CAUSES.

Socrates, the church historian, contemporary of Nestorius, devotes a complete chapter¹ in his *Ecclesiastical History* to describe the outbreak of the Nestorian controversy. According to Socrates, it was not Nestorius but his chaplain Anastasius who first preached against the use of the title Theotokos. He is supposed to have said in a sermon: "Let no one call Mary Theotokos: for Mary was but a woman, and it is impossible that God should be born of a woman."²

Nestorius came to his defence when he was criticised and it was that which created a great sensation at Constantinople. The opponents attacked Nestorius charging him with the heresies especially that of Paul of Samosata, as he was "a fellow countryman of Paul of Samosata."³

1 Socrates; *Ecclesiastical History*, Book VII; Ch. XXXII

2 *Ibid*

3 Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 228

Eusebius, who later became Bishop of Dorylaeum, led the opposition and struck a poster on the wall of St. Sophia in Constantinople comparing the teachings of Nestorius with the teachings condemned by the Council of Antioch about one hundred and sixty years earlier.⁴

Soon after these a second incident took place. During one of the festivals of the Virgin (429 A. D.) Proclus, Bishop of Cyzicus, who was living in Constantinople, defended the title Theotokos in many rhetorical phrases drawn from the Bible, but he was strongly opposed by Nestorius. In his sermon at this occasion, Nestorius is supposed to have said:

He who says simply that God is born of Mary makes the christian dogma ridiculous to the heathen.....for the heathen will reply, "I cannot worship a God who is born, dies, and is buried."⁵

The comment of Marius Mercator, the Latin businessman in Constantinople, who preserved the sermons of Nestorius for us, is interesting to note in this context:

4 The words of Socrates should be considered more trustworthy at this point as he had no special sympathies to Nestorius. He writes: "I cannot then concede that he was either a follower of Paul of Samosata or by Photinus or that he denied the divinity of Christ: but he seemed scared at the term Theotokos, as though it were some terrible phantom." (Socrates; **Ecclesiastical History**, Book VII. Ch. XXXII)

5 Hefele; **op cit.** p. 14

He acknowledged, then, the unity of the combination, but the duality of the natures and substances In short, it was an absurd accusation to charge him with teaching the error of Photinus ⁶, on the contrary, that which he asserted overthrew the doctrine of Photinus. ⁷

Nestorius' first sermon against Proclus was followed by others. In his second discourse he explained that he was opposed to the term Theotokos "because both the Arians and the Apollinarians sheltered themselves behind it", ⁸ and he went on to propose, in the next sermon, that one, instead of the expression "God was born of Mary", should say, "God passed (transit) through Mary." ⁹

The most important of the discourses of Nestorius against Proclus, however, is the fourth one. It was in this that he, according to Hefele, ¹⁰ showed the real colour of his "heresy", proposing the title "*Theodochos*" ¹¹ instead of Theotokos. Nestorius gives his argument in defence of *Theodochos* as follows:

6 Photinus was the bishop of Sirmium and was condemned in the Council of Sirmium in 351 A. D. According to Sozomen, Photinus taught that Christ derived his existence from Mary. He was deposed by this council, says, Sozomen, because he was accused of countenancing the errors of Sabellius and Paul of Samosata (Cf. Sozomen; **op. cit.**; pp 149-52)

7 Hefele; **op. cit.**; p. 15

8 **Ibid** p. 15

9 **Ibid** p. 15

10 **Ibid** p. 16

11 The change is from T to D (**theotokos** to **theodokos**)

The form that received God, let us honour as God together with God. I say who received God, not who gave birth to God.....for there is only one.....God the father to whom this compound word (Theotokos) applies.¹²

In his letter to the Pope he also pointed to the Nicene Council as an argument in his favour:

.....They even dare to treat of the Christ bearing Virgin in a way as alone, with God, for they do not scruple to call the *theotokos*, when the holy and beyond-all-praise Fathers at Nicea said no more of the holy Virgin Mary—not to mention the Scriptures, which every where, both by angels and apostles, speak of the Virgin as mother of Christ, not of God the Word.¹³

His opponents, however, saw in the denial of the title Theotokos, a denial of the divinity of Jesus.

E. Giles writes;

In his first recorded sermon Nestorius quotes John 3:6, and shows that he was anxious to safeguard the humanity of Jesus, and to avoid making Mary into a Goddess. His opponents saw in his teaching a depreciation of the divinity of Christ and of the wonder and glory of the Incarnation.¹⁴

12 Quoted from Bethune Baker; *op. cit*; p. 65

13 Quoted from E. R. Hardy (ed), **Christology of The Later Fathers, The library of Christian Classics**. London: S. C. M. Press Ltd., Vol. III, 1954, p. 348.

14 E. Giles(ed); **Documents Illustrating Papal Authority A. D. 96-454**, London: S. P. C. K., 1952, p. 238

Thus, by preaching against the expression Theotokos Nestorius made many enemies even in his own city of Constantinople. If he, though bound by his christian obligations to teach the true doctrine, had not employed unchristian means to achieve his goal, the conflict might not have led to a disaster. The trouble was that Cyril did not have merely doctrinal reasons for his actions, but intervened first and foremost because of his personal rivalry. As Walker has put it: "Cyril saw his opportunity to humiliate the rival see of Constantinople and the School of Antioch at one blow, while advancing his own Christology."¹⁵

As a matter of fact, it is likely—as the German scholar Edward Schwartz and the English historian Henry Chadwick have shown¹⁶—that the whole controversy came about because the emperor had asked Nestorius to look into the charges against Cyril of Alexandria, brought to the Emperor by four Alexandrians, "which were evidently of a serious nature." This aroused Cyril to the attack. Chadwick writes:

15 W. Walker; **A History of Christian Church**, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959, p. 135.

16 In a paper read by Henry Chadwick to the Oxford Society of Historical Theology on 25th January, 1951, where he quotes from a paper read by Edward Schwartz before Vienna Academy on 14th November, 1928 and published under the title **Cyril and the Monk Victor**.

His (Cyril's) agents in Constantinople saw to it that the controversy over the word *theotokos*, which Nestorius thought he had settled at the beginning of his episcopate, flared up again: and so Cyril was able to divert the proceedings with the emperor from the charges against himself, and could put the doctrinal issue in the forefront."¹⁷

The judgment of Schwrtza is:

Like his uncle Theophilus he finds himself at the head of an exceedingly unruly horde of illiterate Egyptian monks; and as generalissimo of a large standing army he finds an ecclesiastical controversy a God send.¹⁸

Hefele tries to show that these Alexandrians went to Constantinople only because they had known of the tension that had risen between Cyril and Nestorius. He informs us that they "had been punished on account of gross moral excesses."¹⁹ Be that as it may, the dissident group in Constantinople under the leadership of Eusebius strengthened their opposition to the Patriarch. They insulted the Patriarch, exaggerated his statements and excited the people.

17 Henry Chadwick, **Eucharist and Christology in the NESTORIAN CONTROVERSY**, *Journal of Theological studies*

Vol. 11. Part 2, pp. 145–164, Oct. 1951, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951, p. 145

18 *Ibid*; p. 146

19 Hefele: *op. cit*; p. 20

Unfortunately, exactly at this time, Nestorius began to patronise the Pelagians. After the death of Theodore of Mopsuestia in 428 A. D., Julian of Eclanum with three other Italian bishops, Florus, Orontius and Fabius²⁰ had taken refuge in Constantinople. Later, Colestus himself, one of the two leaders of Pelagian heresy, came to Constantinople and presented his grievances to Nestorius. Being the occupant of the ecclesiastical see of the New Rome, Nestorius considered it his duty to write to the Pope of Rome asking for information about the persecution of the Pelagians. The Pope felt insulted by the letter of Nestorius, who considered himself equivalent to the pope.²¹

Cyril got the reports of each and every step that was taken by Nestorius against the use of the title Theotokos in Constantinople. In the first half of 429 A. D., Cyril wrote a letter to the solitudes of Nitria. Though intended for the Egyptian monks, as desired by Cyril, the opponents of Nestorius “turned it to their advantage”²² Hefele attempts to give additional support to the interference of Cyril in this controversy by suggesting that Cyril wrote to the monks of Nitria only after Nestorius had started his propaganda among these monks.²³

20 The ecclesiastical rebels of 418 A. D.

21 It seems beyond doubt that this strained relationship between Rome and Constantinople helped Cyril of Alexandria to find a willing ally in Rome in his cold war against the Patriarch of Constantinople.

22 Duchesne; **op. cit**; p. 18

23 Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 18

On Easter day, 429 A. D., Cyril preached a sermon "to give clear and plain expression to the orthodox doctrine."²⁴ It must be stated, in fairness to Cyril, that the name of Nestorius was not mentioned in this speech. It is quite probable, however, that Cyril had nothing but Nestorianism in mind when he said,:

".....that not the *Godhead* (in itself), but the Logos which was united with the human nature, was born of Mary"²⁵

B. THE SPREAD OF THE CONTROVERSY

In his first letter to the Pope concerning the Pelagians, Nestorius referred also to the beginnings of the christological controversy. He writes:

These heretics mingled the Godhead and manhood in Christ, and blasphemously alleged that the Word of God had, as it were, taken a beginning from the *Christbearer*; that He was built up along with His temple (the humanity), and was buried along with the flesh (humanity); and that, after the resurrection, the flesh (humanity) had passed over into the Godhead.

In the second epistle to the Pope, Nestorius requested him to answer his first letter regarding the Pelagians. In this letter also he wrote about the new heresy "which renews Apollinarianism and Arianism"²⁷. The Pope never

24 & 25 *Ibid*; p. 17

26 *Ibid*; p. 20 (see also Hardy; *op. cit*; p. 347)

27 *Ibid*; p. 20

replied to these letters. Perhaps he was angry at the “arrogance”²⁸ of Nestorius. Another reason might be the delay in getting them translated into Latin. More important was it, however, that “in the mean time very bad news respecting him had been received from Cyril”²⁹.

About this time Cyril felt the urge to write several letters regarding his conflict with Nestorius. The first ones were addressed to the Emperor and four imperial ladies.³⁰ The purpose of writing to the latter was “to explain to them the true doctrines by passages from Holy Scripture and the Fathers, in a very complete manner.”³¹ Kidd calls this letter “a museum of stocktexts.”³²

28 Instead of accusing Nestorius of “arrogance” in this connection, it is possible to see in his action a sense of responsibility. Nestorius writes to the pope as follows, “.....A certain Julian, and Orontius and Fabius saying that they are bishops from the west, have often approached our pious and glorious emperor ... They have often addressed their laments to us and as often have been rejected, yet do not cease to repeat the same, but continue day by day filling the ears of all with their expressions of woe.” (Hardy; *op.cit*; p- 347)

29 Cf. Hefele; *op. cit* p. 25

30 One letter to Arcadia and Marina, the two younger sisters of the Emperor, and the other letter to Pulcheria, the elder sister of the Emperor and Eudocia, his wife.

31 Hefele; *op.cit*; p. 22

32 Kidd; *op.cit*; p. 217

Cyril was generous enough not to complain against Nestorius in these letters. The propriety of sending them, however, under the existing circumstance is under suspicion. The present writer agrees with the judgement of Kidd that these letters were written by Cyril "in order to detach the Court, if possible, from sympathy with Nestorius."³³

Soon after Cyril also established contacts with Rome. It was the Pope who wrote first to Cyril, in order to confirm the news about the sermons of Nestorius. Cyril purposely delayed his reply. Meanwhile Nestorius sent a noble man, named Antochus to Rome with letter concerning the Pelagian refugees to the Pope along with his sermons on Incarnation. As all these writings were in Greek, the Pope asked Arch-deacon Leo³⁴ and John Cassian (360–435) to translate them into Latin and restate the teachings of Nestorius, to which Cassian responded in seven books.³⁵

In April 430, Cyril replied to the letter of the Pope stating that he had kept silence for purpose. After detailing the development of the controversy he justified his stand and asked the Pope's opinion for the next steps. He further requested the Pope to write to the Bishops of Macedonia and all the East. He gave the sermons of Nestorius and also the "answer to the sermons preached by Nestorius against proclus with passages marked."³⁶ The wisdom of

33 *Ibid*; p. 216

34 Later Pope, the author of the celebrated *Tome*.

35 In these seven books Cassian argued that Pelagianism and Nestorianism were related heresies, in addition to defending the title Theotokos and the "real union" of the natures of Christ (Cf. Kidd; *op.cit*; p. 219)

36 Kidd; *op.cit*; p. 221

Cyril was clearly visible in his effort to send his own sermons in Latin translation and the sermons of Nestorius without translation.³⁷

Kidd and Hefele have emphasized the brighter side of Cyril's character in his relation with the Pope. Deacon Possidonious, who was commissioned to deliver these documents to the Pope, had been instructed to deliver these letters to the Pope, only after making it sure that Nestorius had already appealed to the Pope.³⁸

Cyril sounded the alarm of Pelageanism in his letter to the Pope. "He realised", writes Henry Chadwick, "that there was not the slightest hope of arousing the West with the slogan of Theotokos."³⁹ Thus beating the anti-Pelagian drum, Cyril stirred Rome into action, though Pelagianism had little relevance to the main controversy.

In this first letter of Cyril to the Pope, Cyril particularly says that "Nestorius avoids the expression *enosis* and speaks only of a *sunapheia*"⁴⁰ of the two natures. Whatever was the motive of Cyril in replying to the Pope in this way, the outcome was that Cyril had to submit himself to act as the agent of the Pope, as shown below;

37 Henry Chadwick; **op.cit**; p. 150 footnote.

38 Hefele: **op.cit**; pp. 24-5; Kidd, **op.cit**, p.222.

39 Henry Chadwick; **op.cit**; pp. 149-50. Chadwick draws our attention to the fact that eleven years previously Cyril had his own knuckles rapped on this very subject of giving assylum to the condemned Pelagians.

40 *Enosis* means union and *Sunapheia* means conjunction.

C. SYNOD OF ROME

In August 430, a Synod was held at Rome presided over by Pope Celestine. The Pope had already gathered sufficient information about the sermons preached by Nestorius. He was prepared to give his judgement. He addressed the Council as follows:

I remember that on Christmas Day the late Ambrose made all the people sing with one voice to God: O come, Redeemer of the Nations, show forth the virgin birth, let every age marvel; "such a way befits God"? Therefore this agrees well with the meaning of our brother Cyril, when he calls Mary "Mother of God." "Such a way befits God." It is God whom the virgin brought forth by the aid of almighty power. ⁴¹

The Pope cited Hilary, Damasus and other Latin Fathers and as a result Nestorius was condemned. Can there be any doubt that the main motive behind this condemnation was to demonstrate again the papal authority, particularly in relation to the Patriarch of Constantinople? Cyril was entrusted with carrying out the decisions of this council against Nestorius. The Pope wrote seven letters, ⁴² in the name of this council, dated 11th August 430. ⁴³

41 Giles; **op. cit**; p. 240

42 Hefele mentions only four letters while Kidd mentions seven. (Kidd: **op. cit**; p.223) Hefele informs us that the last four letters are substantially the same.

Cf. Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 26

43 These letters are addressed to 1) Cyril, 2) Nestorius, 3) Clergy and People of Constantinople, 4) John, Patriarch of Antioch, 5) Juvenal, 6) Rufus & 7) Flavian.

In his letter to Cyril, the Pope appreciated all what Cyril had done and suggested that attempt should be made to reclaim Nestorius. Further. Nestorius should be asked to recall all those whom he had excommunicated on the charge of holding the view contrary to his own. Then comes the most disputable statement:

If he does not condemn his impious innovation within ten days, he must be expelled from all communion with the orthodox church, and Cyril has to publish this judgement as representative of the Pope.⁴⁴

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- 44 Hefele; *op.cit*; p. 25 The fact that Cyril was authorised to act as the agent of the Pope is a significant event. Kidd translates the relevant passage as follows: "the authority of our See having been combined with yours, will act authoritatively in our stead, and will carry out this sentence with due severity....." Kidd, *op.cit*; p. 223) Herbert Scott clarifies this point further, "But Celestine says, 'joining to your self' the authority of our see' NOT 'joining to your see. The Greek is *sunophtheisesoi*" (Herbert Scott; *op.cit*; p. 150) A Similar translation is given by E. Giles: "Appropriating to yourself the authority of our see, and using our position, you shall with resolute severity carry out this sentence." (Giles; *op.cit*; p. 241). As the main thesis is not to establish papal authority, it is not necessary to give a more detailed treatment to this statement. Herbert Scott states that the whole conduct of Cyril during the Nestorian controversy is a proof of his belief in the primacy of the Pope. (Herbert Scott; *op.cit*; p. 149)

The Pope's letter to Nestorius is written with a different tone. In this letter, he replies the enquiry of Nestorius concerning the Pelagian refugees.⁴⁵ But the most important purpose for which this letter is written, can be seen in the following extract. The Pope writes:

Take heed that unless you teach, about Jesus Christ our God, what the Roman, Alexandrian, and universal Catholic Church holds, and what upto your time was held by the holy Church of Constantinople; and if within ten days after the receipt of this you do not openly and in writing condemn this impious novalty, which tends to undo what the ancient Scriptures join, you are excluded from the communion of the whole Catholic Church.⁴⁶

Nestorius is informed further that Deacon Possidenius is commissioned to take all the necessary documents to the Patriarch of Alexandria. The fact that Cyril has been appointed to act as the agent of the Pope is also made known to Nestorius. It is needless to state that this letter was utterly unfavourable to Nestorius. His teachings were not only blamed and condemned; but his rival and accuser had been appointed to carry out the decision of the local Synod of Rome.

45 The Pope blames Nestorius for being ignorant of the Pelagian controversy. He writes..... it is absurd for you to make enquiries here, when Atticus, your predecessor, sent us Acts made against them'' (Kidd: *op cit*; p. 24)

46 Giles; *op. cit*; p. 241

The Pope's letter to the clergy and people of Constantinople is a justification of his interference in the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Constantinople as it is seen in the opening sentence of the letter: "As St. Paul had care of all the churches so have I a fatherly solicitude for you."⁴⁷

The Pope then speaks about the danger of the teachings of Nestorius which according to him, "Is endangering the Divinity of her Son."⁴⁸ After citing the examples of their great bishops and also of Athanasius, the Pope lets them know the decision of the Synod of Rome.

In his letters to John of Antioch and Juvenal of Jerusalem, the Pope added a word to each of them, as from himself.⁴⁹ To Juvenal, Cyril also wrote letter detailing the dangers involved in this controversy. Cyril stated that "recourse will have to be had to the Emperor, to deliver the cause of religion from this false pastor."⁵⁰ We do not know whether Cyril received replies to this communication. Cyril could not wait for a long period. Thus it was his turn now to hold a Synod of his own at Alexandria.

D. SYNOD OF ALEXANDRIA

While trying to win the support of the Pope, in his crusade against Nestorius, Cyril had worked to enlist adherents in the East for his "noble cause." He could not find a better man than Acacius, Bishop of Beroea.⁵¹ Acacius, who was probably the oldest Bishop of his time, had joined hands with Cyril's uncle Theophilus, against Chrysostom. Cyril wrote to Acacius asking for support. But he was disappointed to read the reply:

47 Kidd; *op. cit.*; p. 224

48 *Ibid*; p. 224

49 *Ibid*; p. 224

50 *Ibid*; p. 225

51 Beroea is now known as Aleppo in Northern Syria.

..... At any rate, clerics and laymen in considerable numbers have come from Constantinople to these parts, and assured us that he had said nothing inconsistent with the teaching of the Apostles or with the Nicene Creed. I read your book to John, ⁵² our new patriarch. He quite agrees with us old men, and is already much thought of everywhere in "the East." He begs you to proceed with prudence.⁵³

Not finding much encouragement from the East, Cyril, however, decided to hold the synod of his own province at Alexandria. This synod, held in November 430 A. D., perhaps was not a special synod called for this purpose⁵⁴. A very comprehensive letter to Nestorius prepared by Cyril was sanctioned in this Synod. After attacking the Nestorian heresy, the announcement was given that Nestorius would be excommunicated if he refused to depart from his errors. Cyril writes:

Rather we deprecate the term of 'junction' *Sunapheias*) as not having sufficiently signified the oneness. But we do not call the Word of God the Father, the God nor the Lord of Christ, lest, we openly cut in two, the one Christ, the Son and Lord, and fall under the charge of blasphemy, making him the God and Lord of himself.⁵⁵

52 John, an old friend of Nestorius, became the Patriarch of Antioch in the same year in which Nestorius became the Patriarch of Constantinople.

53 Kidd; *op.cit* p. 222

54 Kidd thinks that it is probably the usual Synod which is held in autumn in the Archdiocese of Egypt.

55 H. R. Percival (ed); **The Seven Ecumenical Councils** N. P. N. F., Vol. XIV, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957, p. 203.

On the controversial term Theotokos Cyril writes:
 And since the holy Virgin brought forth corporally
 God made one with flesh according to nature for
 this reason we also call her mother of God, not as
 if the nature of the Word had the beginning of its
 existence from the flesh.⁵⁶

The concluding remarks are:

To all these your reverence also should agree, and
 give heed, without any guile, And what it is necessary
 your reverence should anathematize we have
 subjoined to our Epistle. ⁵⁷

Cyril also spoke of the authority of the Bible and the Fathers. Cyril stated in this letter that the Pope was on his side. The action of Pope Celestine in issuing the ultimatum to Nestorius was defended by Cyril in his letter to the clergy and laity of Constantinople, expressing the hope that Nestorius would forsake his false teachings. The clergy and laity were exhorted to hold fast to the orthodox teachings and withdrew communion from Nestorius. The third communication from the Synod of Alexandria was addressed to the monks of Constantinople and had the same contents.⁵⁸ The

56 & 57 **Ibid**; p. 5

58 The monks were the expert agitators in the ecclesiastical controversies, as it became more evident in 449 A. D., in the Robber Synod of Ephesus. Cyril, who was looking for allies, was clever enough to address this letter to monks of constantinople, who, if joined with monks of Egypt, could make the greatest force that could resist both the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Patriarch of Antioch.

Synod of Alexandria came to an end only after appointing four commissioners ⁵⁹ to carry the letters to Constantinople.

The four commissioners arrived in Constantinople on Friday 5th December 430 AD. two weeks after the Emperor had summoned a General Council to solve this controversy. On 7th December, during the Sunday celebration in the Cathedral these documents from the Synod in Alexandria were publicly and solemnly delivered to Nestorius. No reply was given by Nestorius at the moment, but promised to meet the deputies on the following day. This did not happen, however. Instead of the promised interview, Nestorius published the twelve Counter-anathematisms.

E. ANATHEMATISMS & COUNTER ANATHEMATISMS

The twelve anathematisms of Cyril were appended at the close of his third epistle to Nestorius. These anathematisms were meant to expose the mistakes in the teaching of Nestorius. At the same time, it could be asked whether these anathematisms did not betray the weaknesses in the theology of Cyril? Perhaps that was the reason why Cyril did not insist upon the adoption of these anathematisms by the Antiochenes at the time of the reunion of 433 A. D.

The twelve anathematisms were drawn up in the Synod of Alexandria mentioned above. Their contents, with the exception of the seventh anathematism, were explained in Cyril's third epistle. Bindley comments;

59 Hefele tells us that the four commissioners were bishops (Hefele: **op.cit**; p. 229). But Kidd says that only two were bishops (Theopentus and Daniel) and the other two (Potamon and Macarius) were only ordinary clergy from Alexandria (**Kidd; op. cit; p. 34**)

They lack the breadth of statement which the Epistle itself displayed, one may be permitted to regard their composition as an unfortunate mistake both as a matter of theology and policy, if, at least, we Judge them by their immediate results.⁶⁰

They gave Nestorius and later Theodoret of Cyrus a chance to expose the "heretical teachings" of Cyril, at least to the satisfaction of their own adherents. Hefele even calls the action of Cyril in adding the twelve anathematisms, "a blunder."⁶¹

The counter-anathematisms drawn up by Nestorius tried to expose the Apollinarian tendencies of Cyril and succeeded in winning the support of John, the Patriarch of Antioch, for Nestorius in a common fight against "the Apollinarian Cyril.", Thus, Hefele remarks, the anathematisms of Cyril "served to defeat the project they were intended to promote."⁶²

Both Cyril and Nestorius are blamed by Hefele. Without further comments of the merits and demerits of the Counter - anathematisms, let us examine each one of these anathematisms side by side.⁶³ We should be grateful to Marius Mercator who preserved them for us in a latin translation together with his criticisms. The counter-anathematisms serve as a corrective to our understanding of the christology of Nestorius.

60 T. Herbert Bindley (ed); **The Oecumenical Documents of the Faith**, revised by F. W. Green, London:

Methuen & Co; Ltd., fourth edition, 1950, p. 124

61 Hefele further states: "If conciliation was still the purpose of the Council the anathemas were a mistake for the immediate purpose" (Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 228.)

62. Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 128

63. See Appendix A.

It is still a controversial issue whether the third epistle of Cyril with these twelve anathematisms was ever read and approved in the council of 431 A. D. Percival thinks that this is only a matter of archeological and historical interest and from the theological point of view the question is entirely uninteresting.⁶⁴ At any rate it is certain that the Acts of the Council of 431 A. D. do not tell us whether Cyril ever attempted to read this letter with the anathematisms in the council of Ephesus.⁶⁵

64. Percival (ed); *op. cit*; p.199

65. Hefele, who formerly thought that the twelve anathematisms were not expressly confirmed in the Council of Ephesus in 431 A. D., changed his opinion to that of Tillemont in believing that these anathematisms of Cyril were read and confirmed in the Council of 431. The "Acts" of the Council do not tell us about this, just because the "Acts" are incomplete. (Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 48 foot note)

III

RIVAL SYNODS* AT EPHESUS

A. PREPARATION FOR THE COUNCIL

1. CALLING OF THE COUNCIL:—

On November 19, 430 A. D. Emperor Theodosius II issued a circular letter, in his name as well as in the name of his western colleague Valentinian III, summoning a general council for the Pentecost of the following year to be held at Ephesus. This letter was addressed to all the Metropolitans of the provinces asking them to assemble at Ephesus for the Pentecost of 431 A. D. Each Metropolitan was allowed to bring "Some able suffragan bishops."¹

In his letter to Cyril, the Emperor "accuses him of having disturbed the peace, of having given forth rash utterances, of not having acted openly and honourably and having brought everything into confusion." He blamed Cyril for having communicated to Pulcheria and Eudocia and "for having most improperly endeavoured by means of this letter, in an underhand way, to work out a malicious design of sowing discord even in the imperial family."²

1. Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 40

2. **Ibid** p. 41 The Emperor's letter tells us that Cyril's letter in addition to the infringement of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Constantinople, is an attempt to create discord in the royal family.

It was the pure intention of the Emperor that the dispute of doctrine should be settled by the Council. The Emperor also desired it to be ecumenical and universal, and especially commanded Cyril to appear in this Synod because he "would not endure that any one should only be a ruler and not take common counsel with others, nor allow himself to be taught by them."³

The Emperor despatched a special letter to Augustine, the celebrated Bishop of Hippo, inviting him to attend the Council of Ephesus, because Augustine was considered as the greatest theologian of the time. When the official Ebagnius, who was entrusted with the delivery of the letter, reached Hippo heard the news about Augustine's death.

* It is more correct to speak of the Synods of Ephesus of 431 A. D. rather than the Synod. The fact was that the both sides held their Synods. Moreover, both the Synods were considered invalid when and after they were held. In 433 A. D., however, when the union formula was approved by the Patriarch of Alexandria and the Patriarch of Antioch, the Synod of Cyril got recognition. As this is the study of the documents let us see them as rival synods because they were held as rival Synods, though the aim of the Emperor was to hold an ecumenical Council.

3. *Ibid.* p. 41; According to Kidd, the hand of Nestorius is traceable in it. To forbid innovations till the Council met was to suspend the proceedings of Celestine and Cyril against Nestorius. (Kidd; *op. cit.*; pp. 229-30)

ii. Pre-Synod Letters:—

After receiving the summons from the Emperor to attend the proposed Synod Cyril wrote to the Pope to seek advice on the procedure of the Synod, asking whether Nestorius should be allowed to appear at the proposed Synod as a member, or whether the sentence of deposition pronounced against Nestorius, was valid. The Pope replied in a letter dated May 7, 431 advising Cyril to do everything in order to restore the peace of the Church and to win Nestorius to the truth.⁴

The Pope wrote to the Emperor on May 15, 431 stating his inability to attend the Synod personally. He also requested the Emperor not to allow any innovations. The Pope asked the Emperor even to regard the interests of the Faith as higher than those of the State and the peace of the Church as more important than the peace of the

4. Hefele; *op. cit.*: p. 41. Kidd, who is not bound to uphold authority of the Papacy like Hefele, questions the propriety of the letter which Cyril wrote to the Pope as mentioned above. Though Kidd does not comment on the “praiseworthy” reply of the Pope, he comments on the Cyril’s letter as ‘a strange question, not only as opposed to justice and Christian charity; but for the simple reason that the Imperial summons to a General Council *Ipso facto* suspended the proceedings of the two Patriarchs” (Kidd; *op. cit.*: p. 237)

Nations.⁵ It was the etiquette or policy of the Popes to avoid attending the General Councils in person, and therefore Celestine sent his legates instead.

The role that was to be played by the papal legates in the deliberations of the Council was also clearly stated. They were allowed to take part in the assemblies, but not to *mix* in the discussions. They were free to *give judgement* on the views of others. They are also asked to accompany Cyri! to the Emperor in Constantinople and to hand over the papal letters, if the "old faith" triumphed.⁶

iii. PROTECTOR OF THE SYNOD:-

As both the Emperors (Theodosius II and Valentinian III) were unable to be present in the Synod, Count Candidian, the Captain of the Imperial Bodyguard, was appointed as the Protector of the Synod. Perhaps Candidian was the most acceptable man for all. We have no record to allege that the appointment of Candidian was due to the recommendation of Nestorius.

When Candidian was appointed as the Protector of the Council, Theodosius II issued specific instructions: Candidian was to take no immediate part in the discussions on the contested points of faith. The Emperor also issued instructions concerning the behaviour of the monks.⁷

5. & 6. Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 42.

7. The edict reads: "Candidian was to remove.....the monks and lay men.....who were in no way needed for the examination of the sacred doctrines" (Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 43)

The Emperor had anticipated the possibility of disorder in the Council. Perhaps, anybody familiar with the tactics of Theophilus of Alexandria used against Chrysostom, would have taken this precaution⁸ against his nephew and successor.

iv. ARRIVAL OF NESTORIUS AND CYRIL:—

Nestorius started on his journey to attend the Council, before the Pope sent his legates from Rome. Nestorius took with him ten bishops and several friends. Most distinguished among them was Count Iraneus, though he came to Ephesus not to “take part in the transactions of the Synod, nor in the commission of the Candidian.”⁹

Socrates speaks about the arrival of Nestorius in the following words:

Immediately after the festival of Easter therefore Nestorius, escorted by a great crowd of his adhere-

8. The edict states: “He (Candidian) was, besides, to watch lest the discussions among the members of the Synod themselves should degenerate in to violent disputes and hinder the more exact investigation of truth; and on the contrary, see that every statement should be heard with attention, and that every one put forward his view, or his objection, without let or hindrance, So that at last an unanimous decision might be arrived at in peace by the holy Synod.” (Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 43)

9. *Ibid*, p. 43.

nts, repaired to Ephesus, and found many of the bishops already there.¹⁰

On arrival at Ephesus, Nestorius did not get any welcome by Memnon, Bishop of Ephesus, for he had lent his support to the rival of Nestorius. Probably he carried on a propaganda against Cyril and Memnon. Still it could not make any impact on the people of Ephesus who were with their bishop.

Cyril took with him fifty bishops, which, according to Kidd, is about the half the number of his suffragans. He had fair winds as far as Rhodes, and he arrived at Ephesus probably on 2nd or 3rd June. In a letter which Cyril wrote to his clergy after his arrival at Ephesus he declared that he was looking forward "with longing to the actual opening of the Synod"¹²

The details concerning the number of people who accompanied Cyril, are seen from the following:

The number which Cyril put on board was fifty and to these he added a considerable number of inferior clergy, of *Parabolani* and other church officials, and above all, some monks. Among the

10. Socrates; *op. cit*; book VII, Ch. 34.

Hefele writes with reference to these words: "As though going to battle, he was accompanied by a large number of men in armour." (Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 44) Ideas such as "battle", "armour" etc are not found in Socrates; however.

11. Kidd; *op. cit*; p. 235.

12. Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 44

last, the most prominent was the famous Schnoudi almost a hundred years old, who had come down from his monastery on the upper Nile. The whole throng was devoted body and soul to the patriarch; the idea in the minds of all of them was that they were setting out under his leadership, to slay the Dragon of Hell.¹³

As soon as Cyril and his "Egyptian squadron" (Duchesne) reached Ephesus, they tried their best to enlist supporters. Next to Nestorius, Cyril was representing the highest ecclesiastical rank among the prelates who came to Ephesus, and considered himself more authoritative than Nestorius, because he was commissioned by the pope. It was this "double capacity" (Duchesne) "which persuaded Cyril to go ahead and open the Council on June 22, as we see later."¹⁴

Cyril did not make any effort to meet Nestorius or solve their difference. He carried on an aggressive propaganda against Nestorius, and discreditable stories were set in circulation, Duchesne calls it "the position of 403 over again—a renewal of the conflict of Theophelus and John"¹⁵ This feeling of bitter antagonism between Cyril and Nestorius spread in to the inferior ranks of supporters, which led, says Duchesne, "in to brawls between Nestorius's people and the sailors of Alexandria."¹⁶

13. Duchesne; *op.cit*; p. 240.

14. *Ibid*; p. 243

15. *Ibid*; p. 242

16. *Ibid*; p. 242

V. THE ARRIVAL OF OTHER DELEGATES:-

Juvenal, Bishop of Jerusalem, arrived on 12th June. He had taken with him some fifteen bishops of Palestine. Juvenal took the side of Cyril.¹⁷ Flavian of Philippi (as proxy for the papal vicar of Eastern Illyricum, viz. Rufus of Thessalonica) was there with the Macedonian bishops, as well as, Memnon, Bishop of Ephesus. Though the latter became a bishop only that year, he had a prominent place in this controversy, as he was the Bishop of the host city of the Council. Moreover, he had the advantage of having about forty suffragans.¹⁸ In addition to his 40 suffragans, Memnon had command over twelve bishops from Pamphylia. To help Cyril, Memnon shut all the churches at Ephesus against Nestorius and his supporters.

From Africa, came a deacon named Basulas, who, after a long and dangerous journey, came on behalf of the once glorious church at Carthage.¹⁹ More delegates could not come from that part of Africa as the country was lying at the mercy of the Vandal invaders.

17. Though it might look strange that the Bishop of Jerusalem took the side of the Patriarch of Alexandria instead of the Patriarch of Antioch, the fact was that this ambitious prelate was engaged in the attempt to create a Patriarchate for himself at the expense of that of Antioch. So he decided to please the ecclesiastical leader who had better chances to triumph at Ephesus (Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 241).

18. Apart from the African provinces, the 'Diocese' of Asia was the country richest in bishoprics (Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 241)

19. Kidd; *op. cit*; p. 238

B. SYNOD OF CYRIL

1. Cyril's attempt to open the council:—

On 21st June, Cyril, in the capacity of a self appointed judge, summoned the Council for the following day. This action was highly questionable, and the arguments put forward in defence of Cyril are hardly valid. The fact that Cyril was commissioned by the Pope did not give him any right to convene the Council, since it had been called by the Emperor, not by the Pope. Only count Candidian could initiate the proceedings of the council. Even the Pope himself did not have this right as in the history of the ecumenical councils of the universal church, the Pope of Rome has never opened a Council or presided over one.²⁰ The best comment on Cyril's action, therefore seems to be Duchesne's words: "It was too much"²⁰

It was on the evening of June 21, Cyril received a protest against the opening of the Council before the anticipated arrival of the Antiochenes. Though the protest was signed by 68 bishops of whom 21 were Metropolitans, it

20 It is true that the Popes were never in the proximity of the place where these councils were held. The only exception was Pope Virgilius who was at Constantinople in 553 at the time of the fifth ecumenical council. Perhaps he did the right thing in abstaining from attending the council to uphold the primacy of the Roman see; for, if he was present, he would not have enjoyed any privilege in that council.

21 Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 243

was in vain "Any one but Cyril," remarks Duchense, "would have hesitated; but his choice was made."²² Cyril was absolutely sure of his majority and so went ahead, like Theophilus before him and Dioscorus after him, to condemn his rival.

The basics for the protest was the delay in the arrival of the bishops from Antioch. John, on his way to Ephesus, sent a letter to Cyril, announcing his arrival, and also stating that in addition to the length of the road, the death of several of their horses, was the main cause of the delay.²³ Only two bishops, Alexander of Apamea (431-4) and Alexander of Hierapolis (431-4), were able to reach Ephesus with this message from their Patriarch before the opening of Cyril's Synod. That John should deliberately have delayed his journey to avoid the humiliation of being present at the time of the condemnation of his friend Nestorius is not likely.²⁴ It was rather Cyril who was afraid of John's opposition and therefore wanted to go ahead as quickly as possible.²⁵ At any rate, Nestorius was willing to wait, so was the Imperial Commissioner.

22 *Ibid*; p. 244

23. This letter remains another point of diverse interpretation. It is agreed by some scholars that John asked Cyril to wait only 4 or 5 days and then to proceed with the business without waiting for him, if he is still detained. The supporters of John, however, hold that John never asked Cyril to proceed without him .

24 & 25 Kidd; *op. cit*; p. 240

II. CYRIL OPENS THE COUNCIL:—

On 22nd June the supporters of Cyril assembled for the proposed Synod. Though they gathered by the summons of Cyril issued the previous day, Candidian intervened, as it was his duty to see the law and order maintained in regard to the Council which was originally summoned by the Emperors. Candidian, hearing that the bishops had gathered “in the church Mary,”²⁶ rushed there to protest against the proceedings as “it was the Emperors’s will that none should assemble apart from the rest but that all should be done in common.”²⁷

Cyril ignored Candidian since delay would help his opponents. Cyril knew that “the presence of the Easterns would bring to Nestorius a powerful reinforcement if not of numbers, at any rate of authority.”²⁸ The Council of Cyril pressed Candidian to produce authority. When Candidian showed the letter of Theodosius II, they “brushed it aside”; whereupon he withdrew from this illegal assembly after further protests.²⁹ The supporters of Nestorius who were endeavouring to get a hearing to their ‘protest’, “were shown the door together with Count Candidian.”³⁰

26 Probably dedicated to the name of Virgin Mary. (Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 244)

27. *Ibid*; p. 24

28. *Ibid*; p. 243

29. Kidd; *op. cit*; p. 241

30. Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 1244

Nestorius later, in *Bazaar of Heracleides*, expressed his satisfaction with Candidian's action:

...he (Candidian) strained himself to persuade with words those who were not inclined to hearken unto words, who were in need of some one who would control them against their will according to the imperial command, which was acknowledged by all men to be just³¹

Cyril proceeded as if he was the authorised President of the Council and went on to summon Nestorius. Nestorius ignored this first summons sent through four bishops. After the gathering of 22nd Nestorius was sent a second summons, which was also refused. The third one was a strict one "as though addressed to accused person."³³

Though the second deputation could not meet Nestorius personally, as his residence was guarded by the troops by the command of the Candidian, Nestorius had sent word that "he would appear as soon as all the bishops were assembled."³⁴ No further explanation was given to the

31. Nestorius; *Bazaar*, *op. cit*; p. 112. 32. *Ibid*; p. 132

33. Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 245. Duchesne reminds us that it was not a new technique. It had a strong precedence. He writes: "Hence he (Cyril) made up his mind to an audacious **coup de force**, closely resembling that which had proved so successful for his uncle Theophilus in the business of John Chrysostom: to avoid being in the position of the accused, he boldly assumed the **role** of judge." (Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 243)

34. Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 146

deputation which came with third summons on the same day. It was not necessary for Nestorius to give any more explanation just because Candidian himself had agreed to this view and asked for the postponement of the Council at least for four days.³⁵

iii. THE FIRST SESSION, 22 JUNE 431:—

Cyril proceeded with the business of the Council in the absence of Candidian. Juvenal of Jerusalem demanded that the teachings of Nestorius be examined, as he had declined to be present. Cyril's second letter to Nestorius was read and approved by the Council. About 126 short speeches were made at this occasion by the bishops. Afterwards the letter of Nestorius to Cyril was read. Thirty-four bishops spoke stating that it was not in agreement with the faith of Nicea.

At this point all the bishops cried out together the following condemnation:

If any one does not anathematize Nestorius, let him be himself anathema; the true faith anathematizes him. If any one has communion with Nestorius, let him be anathema. We all anathematize the letter and the doctrines of Nestorius. We all anathematize the heretic Nestorius and his adherents and his impious faith and his impious doctrine. We all anathematize the impious (*asebe*) Nestorius.....”³⁶

35. *Ibid*; p. 46

36. Mansi and Hardouin, quotee from Hefele; *op cit*; p. 47-8.

Two other documents also were read and passed. The documents are the letter of the Pope and the Roman Synod and the letter of Cyril and his Synod at Alexandria. The four priests who were sent to summon Nestorius were examined in the Council, The two friends of Nestorius, Theodotus of Ancyra and Acacius of Melitens, who had endeavored to convert him from his errors," were questioned to know the position of Nestorius. According to the suggestion of Flavian of Philippi, a number of passages from the Fathers were cited to show the ancient faith concerning the union of the Godhead and manhood in Christ. The final document produced in this session was the letter of Capreolus, Archbishop of Carthage, in which he asked the council not to entertain any novel doctrines.

After making an official condemnation of Nestorius,³⁶ the first session ended. The final condemnation was signed by 198 bishops who were present. The decision was announced to the people who were waiting outside. There was a great rejoicing in Cyril's camp. The city was illuminated in many places. The sentence of the Council was sent to Nestorius the next day, addressed people of Constantinople also. Cyril, in the capacity of the President of this Synod, wrote to his friends in Constantinople such as Archimandrite Dalmatius requesting them to give the 'correct' report to the Emperor, as the official report to the Emperor was not completed at that time.

SYNOD OF JOHN OF ANTIOCH

As soon as the Antiochenes arrived at Ephesus on 5th June 431, they were notified by Cyril concerning all

³⁶ For the text of condemnation see Mansi, t. IV. p. 1211; Hardouin, t. i. p. 1422; Fuche, i. c. s. 78 (Cf. Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 51)

what has happened in his Council. They were ordered to tell Cyril not to communicate with Nestorius in any way. However, John the Patriarch of the ancient See of Antioch, who knew well that the Patriarch of Alexandria, had no right to give orders to him, ignored Cyril and immediately called for a meeting.³⁷

It was neither an ordinary gathering nor a private conspiracy in the lodging of John of Antioch at Ephesus. It was an assembly of bishops in the presence of the Imperial Commissioner, Candidian, who was charged with the commission to convene the proposed Synod of Ephesus. Though smaller in number compared to the assembly of Cyril, this gathering in the presence of the official representative of the Emperor, presided over by one who was not directly a party in this controversy, had a greater claim to be the legally constituted Council of Ephesus.

This, then, is the reason why, even today, some Nestorians claim that if there was a third ecumenical Council it was the Council of John of Antioch, because it had two Patriarchs in the gathering, apart from the Imperial Representative Candidian, whose presence added legal claim to it. In contrast to this, Cyril's council had only one Patriarch, i. e., Cyril himself. Even the legates of the Pope had not arrived at this stage, though they arrived later and confirmed what had already happened.

The main business of the Synod of John was to condemn Cyril and Memnon. This decision was communicated to the Emperor. The Report reads:

37. Kidd states that John held his Synod as soon as he arrived, "without even waiting to change his travelling dress" (Kidd; *op. cit.*; pp. 243-4)

We have therefore deposed both the aforementioned, Cyril and Memnon, and have excluded them from all the services of the Church.....until they shall reject and anathematize the chapters issued by Cyril, which are full of the Eunomian and Arian heresies, and shall in obedience to your piety's command, assemble together with us, and shall in an orderly manner and with all examine into the questions at issue, and confirm the pious doctrine of the Holy Father.³⁸

The above words testify to the fact that the aim of the party of John of Antioch was not to hold a separate Synod of their own. They anticipated and even demanded for the combined Synod to discuss the question facing the universal church. What was summoned by the Emperors, was nothing but a combined Synod, and it should be assembled without any excuse.

This Council did not say any word concerning Nestorius; for this reason Hefele rightly points out that the Antiochenes were not Nestorians *positively*; since they did not sanction the doctrine of Nestorius.³⁹ It is also a comfort for Hefele, that "this Synod, of which John speaks in such grandiloquent terms, numbered only forty-three members, including himself, while on the other side there were more than two hundred."⁴⁰

The Council of John condemned Cyril and Memnon without summoning them or hearing their point of view. This has been pointed out as a strong case against John.

38 Theodoret; **ettlr** CLII; **N. P. N. F.**; **op. cit**; p. 333e

39 Hefele; **op. cit**; pp. 57-8 footnote.

40 **Ibid**; p. 56

But John was fully aware of the fact that Cyril would never respond to any summons issued by the Synod of John. Cyril was the victor upto the arrival of John and so would never give up his already established presidentship. Moreover, as Kidd admits, the Antiochenes were of opinion that Cyril had simply hastened on the condemnation of Nestorius to escape being put on his defence himself.⁴¹

Actually the Council of John discussed the problem before they condemned Cyril and Memnon.⁴² A Roman Catholic writer, Philip Hughes, in his book, *The Church in crisis*⁴³ describes this council as follows:

There was speech of Cyril's autocratic conduct, of the heresy which his twelve anathemas contained and, finally, John of Antioch who presided over the gathering proposed a sentence that Cyril and Memnon be deposed for the heresies contained in the anathemas, the heresies of Arius and Apollinarius, and all the bishops excommunicated who had allowed themselves to be led away by these chiefs.⁴⁴

41 Kidd: *op. cit.*; p. 244

42 Socrates makes a great blunder stating that the condemnation of Cyril and Memnon took place before the arrival of John of Antioch. There is no evidence to suppose that the partisans of Nestorius constituted a council before the arrival of John of Antioch. Evagrius is correct in his judgement about this, when he writes, "Socrates, in ignorance, has given a different account." (Compare Socrates. **Ecclesiastical History**, Ch. XXXIV with Evagrius; *op. cit.*; Ch. V)

43 With the Imprimature of Cardinal Spellman

44 Philip Hughes; **The Church in Crisis**, London: Burns & Oates, 1961, pp. 48-9.

After the Synod, John sent a letter to the Emperor requesting for his intervention "to remedy without delay these men's masterful madness" which, like a hurricane, was sweeping the less moderate among them in to "pernicious heresy."⁴⁵

D. THE LATER SESSIONS OF CYRIL'S SYNOD

i. Second Session, July 10 :-

The arrival and the subsequent Synod of the Antiochenes necessitated further sessions in Cyril's camp. Now Cyril had to fight, not with Nestorius alone, but, also with John of Antioch who excommunicated Cyril and Memnon. To attain the final goal six more sessions were held under the presidentship of Cyril.

Cyril's Synod sent a letter to the two Emperors dated July 1, 431, explaining the subject of the Nestorian controversy along with the reports and Acts of the first session, because the reports of Candidian were, as Hefele says, "one sided."⁴⁶ The arrival of the Roman legates⁴⁷ gave an opportunity for the second session. In the presence of all the bishops present in the first session, the second session was held on 10th July where the papal legates read the letter of Pope Celestine, first in the Latin text and then in the Greek translation. When the letter was read, the Synod exclaimed:-

That is a true judgement, thanks to Celestine the new Paul, to Cyril, the New Paul, to Celestine the watchman of the faith.⁴⁸

45 Theodoret; **letter** No. CIVII, **op.cit**; p. 335.

46 Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 61

47 Bishop Aracadius, Bishop Projectus & Presbyter Philip.

48 Hefele: **op. cit**; p. 63

Bishop Projectus asked the Synod to agree to the sentence delivered by the Pope. Archbishop Firmus of Caesarea declared that the first session had approved of the letter of the Pope to Cyril and so indirectly all those present in the Synod had fulfilled the task of carrying out the Papal sentence condemning Nestorius. Another Papal legate, Presbyter Philip, thanked the Synod, stating that "the holy members had adhered to the holy head, knowing well that Peter was the head of the catholic faith and of all the apostles."⁴⁹ He further asked the Synod to submit to them the decision of the first session, so that they may be confirmed with the commission of the Pope. The session ended with the agreement to this proposal.

ii Third Session 11th July, 431:-

The next day, at the same place, the Synod assembled. The papal legates declared that they were satisfied with the Acts of the first session, which they must have read during the previous night. Still, they demanded that the Acts of the first session should be read in their presence. The papal legates spoke about the importance of the pope etc. and signed the Acts of all the three sessions. The bishops present in the Synod signed a Synodal letter to the Emperor condemning Nestorius and asking for appointing another bishop in Constantinople.

iii Fourth Session 16th July, 431:-

Five days after the third session, the fourth session was held. The important development at this session was the sending of the three bishops to summon John of Antioch. Their attempt, however, did not produce any result, as they

⁴⁹ Ibid; p. 63

were not allowed to see him. According to Hefele, the house of John was surrounded by armed men, who uttered insulting remarks respecting the Synod of Cyril, and threatened these deputies.⁵⁰

when the Synod heard this report, Cyril declared that John had an evil conscience and asked the synod to pronounce punishment against John. Juvenal of Jerusalem suggested to send a second delegation to summon John. This deputation of another three bishops was not received by John. The Synod declared that the condemnations of Cyril and Memnon by John and his Synod was invalid and decided to summon him for a third time.

iv Fifth session 17th July, 431

On the next day, fifth session was held. Cyril reported that John had circulated and propagated the deposition of Cyril and Memnon accusing them of Apollinarianism, Arianism, and Eunomianism. The Synod sent three bishops to summon John for the third and final time. John's archdeacon received them and delivered a document to them stating, "The holy Synod sends this to you." The deputation declined to accept this document. After consultation with his Patriarch, the archdeacon stated that the decision of their Synod had been communicated to the Emperor and therefore they had to wait for further instructions. When the bishops of the side of Cyril tried to deliver their message, the Archdeacon refused to hear it stating that "you have not received the document, neither will I listen to the message of your Synod."⁵¹

50 **Ibid**; p. 65

51. **Ibid**; p. 67

Hearing about the behaviour of John, the fifth session pronounced the sentence of excommunication and suspended him and his followers from all spiritual jurisdiction until they confessed their offences.⁵² The Synod reported their proceedings to the Emperors as well as to the Pope. In order to get the approval of the Emperor for their council the report argued;

.....The Emperor should certainly not regard that conventicle of sinners as a synod. Even at Nicea a small minority had separated itself from the Synod of 318 bishops, but these men were in no way regarded as a Council by Constantine the Great: on the contrary, they were punished.⁵³

They informed the Emperor that "it would be in the highest degree absurd that thirty persons⁵⁴ should set themselves in opposition to a Synod of two hundred and ten bishops."⁵⁵ In a sermon which Hefele calls "beautiful and very powerful discourse,"⁵⁶ Cyril abused John. The Synodal letter to the pope contains the history of the Ephesian Synod, stating that Pelagianism was condemned in this council

52. Judging from the list of the name of those punished, Hefele concludes that this party had lost a considerable number of adherents. Hefele does not sound very accurate in his judgement. This does not mention the name of Theodoret of Cyrus. It is impossible to think that Theodoret had withdrawn his support to John.

53. Mansi; t. IV. P. 1326, sq; Hardouin, t. i. p. 1503-10: Hefele; **op. cit**; pp. 68-9.

54. It is not fair to state that John's Synod had only 30 persons while 43 had already signed.

55. Hefele; **op. cit**; p. 69

56. **Ibid**; p. 65

V. THE LAST TWO SESSIONS, 22ND & 31ST JULY:-

Exactly one month after the first session, Cyril presided over the sixth session. The main business of this session was in respect of Charisius, a cleric of the church of Philadelphia. This session, like the following one, does not have much direct bearing on our study, and therefore, a detailed discussion is not necessary. The seventh and the last session⁵⁷ discussed and settled the question of the Archbishopric of Cyprus. This Synod sent circular letter to all the bishops, clergy and laity announcing the excommunication of John of Antioch and his adherents.

E. SUMMARY

Thus ended in dissension the Council of Ephesus of 431 A. D. Both sides did not satisfy the Emperor's demand for an ecumenical Synod and the meetings at Ephesus under two rival camps did not produce any solution, but rather created more problems. The split between Nestorius and Cyril developed into a split between John of Antioch and Cyril.

John of Antioch had justification for his action. He explained the delay in his letter to the Emperor where he showed the reasons such as the distance, famine, tumults of the people, unusual severity of the rainy season etc.⁵⁸ The impatience shown by Cyril, inspite of the written request of sixty eight bishops, casts doubt on the intention of the one who presided over it, apart from the question of his authority to do so.

57 According to the Acts of the Synod, this last session was held only on 31 st August. Garnier, who edited the works of Marius Mercator, puts it as 31st July.

58. Theodoret; **Letter**, No. CLII; **op. cit**; p, 333

The part played by the Roman legates can be viewed from two different angles. One is that of the primacy of the See of Peter and the other as the representatives of the Roman church without any special authority, except the place of honour.

Under these circumstances, the rival Synod of John was an inevitable one. The Synod of John helped the church from being lost to one extreme. In the long run it forced Cyril to take a balanced view and to reach a compromise between the Alexandrine and Antiochene groups in 433 A. D.

IV

THE AFTERMATH

A. THE IMPERIAL INTERVENTION:—

When the Synods of Cyril and John were held in Ephesus there was utter confusion. Each party was in a position to fight and defeat the rivals. John's party attempted to consecrate a new bishop for Ephesus in the place of Memnon who was condemned along with Cyril by the Synod of John. But when John tried to enter the Basilica, he was opposed by the congregation. All the churches were closed to the supporters of Nestorius.

Thus the month of June ended in confusion and uncertainty. Nestorius was too sure of his influence on the Emperor and the Imperial Commissioner and Cyril was equally confident that the techniques he had learned from his uncle Theophilus would bring him the ultimate victory. In the end it was the energy of Cyril and lethargy of Nestorius that decided the outcome. Perhaps Nestorius lost the courage to fight Cyril after witnessing the transactions of the Cyrilline Synod, in which even Memnon a subordinate

of Nestorius, had closed his churches against the Patriarch of Constantinople. This humiliation was too much for Nestorius.

i. The role of candidian:—

Count Candidian sent report after report to the Emperor. It could be assumed that his reports were in favour of Nestorius. It was alleged that Count Candidian did not allow the report of the party of Cyril to reach the Emperor. The Nestorians in Constantinople, according to Hefele, checked the “highways and gates, and visited all the ships” to prevent any letter from Cyril’s side from reaching the Emperor, Cyril was too clever for them however. His messenger, dressed as a beggar, managed to smuggle a letter to Constantinople by concealing it in a stick.¹

Candidian’s sympathy with the side of Nestorius was brought to the notice of the Emperor by Dalmatius, who had great reputation and had not left his monastery for forty eight years. But when he got the smuggled letter of Cyril he felt called by God to go to appeal to the Emperor. Dalmatius told the Emperor that the party of Cyril could not give any report of the Synod and asked a challenging question “Will you rather hear six thousand bishops (the whole of the orthodox Christendom) or a single impious man (Nestorius)?”² The Emperor, who had a great respect for Dalmatius, was left without any choice, except to permit the group of Cyril to send a deputation.

1. Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 78 (Cf. Mansi. t. IV. p. 1429, Hardouin. t. i. p. 1588 sq)

2. *Ibid*; pp 78–79

Count Iranaeus, a friend of Nestorius, (later Bishop of Tyre) was sent to the Emperor to give the report of the Nestorian group. Iranaeus gave information to the Emperor about the maltreatment of Nestorius, John of Antioch and their adherents by the hand of Memnon. He thus succeeded temporarily in winning the Emperor's concern for Nestorius. But the people of Constantinople were against the Nestorian party. The Secretary of Cyril, a physician named John, won over many of the high officials to the side of Cyril of Alexandria. Three ways were open to the Emperor.

1. To confirm the decisions of both councils.
2. To send new commissioners to Ephesus to settle matters there.
3. To call the eminent bishop for a fresh council in Constantinople in the presence of the Emperor.

ii. The Depositions Confirmed:—

Theodosius II, who had called the Synod of Ephesus, now confirmed the deposition of both Cyril, Memnon and Nestorius. He sent the treasurer of state, Count John, to Ephesus to publish the sentence as well as to make peace by reconciling the two groups. This edict was addressed to all the prominent bishops who were originally invited to this Synod including Augustine, who had died on 28th August, 430 !

The Emperor's confirmation of the rival Synod of John, in the form of deposing Cyril and Memnon, is a problem to the pro-Cyril group. Hefele suggests an explanation by stating that the Emperor "was himself destitute of

all necessary insight into the whole theological question, otherwise he could not have taken under his protection first Nestorius, and then as we shall see at a later period his opposite Eutyches.”³

Hefele therefore, considers the arrest of Cyril and Memnon as ‘error’ of the Emperor. He asks:

what wonder if the never very powerful minded Emperor Theodosius II was led into error, especially as his commissioner, Candidian was in entire agreement with the Antinochees.⁴

As a whole, there is a tendency to underestimate the part played by the Emperor to bring about a peaceful conclusion during this christological controversy. A correct directive to this view is seen in the unbiased assessment of the case by Alice Gardner. She states that the builder of the Theodosian Wall and the promulgator of the Code can hardly have been a weakling that some historians would paint him. He seems to have been a man of some energy and love of fair play, though he had not the strength to carry out a policy to the end.⁵

iii. The mission of the new Commissioner:—

Count John, the new commissioner, arrived in Ephesus at the beginning of August. He called a fresh Synod of both parties in which both Nestorius and Cyril

3. *Ibid*; p. 83

4. *Ibid*; p. 84

5. Alice Gardner; **The Cambridge Medieval History**, vol. I, H. M. Gwatkin & J. P. Whitney, (eds), Ch. XVIII, Cambridge: University Press, 1924, p. 500

were present. Memnon was absent and while questioned later by Count John, he made an "insufficient excuse."

The council was not at all a peaceful one. The supporters of Cyril wanted that Nestorius should not be in the assembly as he was already deposed. The 'sacred letter of the Emperor' was not to be read in the presence of the Antiochenes. On the other hand the Antiochenes had demanded that Cyril and Memnon were already excommunicated and therefore Cyril should not be allowed in this assembly. Finally the letter was read. Count John succeeded by "*persuasion and force*."⁶ Count Candidian undertook the custody of Nestorius and Count Jacobus the custody of Cyril. Later, Memnon was summoned and given to the custody of Count Jacobus.

We can legitimately conclude that the supporters of Nestorius were satisfied at the arrest of Cyril and Memnon, which could be interpreted as the approval of their own Synod. In their second letter to the Emperor, sent from Chalcedon, they recall this event as follows:

We came at once; on our arrival we allowed ourselves no rest making our petition, both before your piety and before the illustrious assembly, that they would take up the quarrel for the chapters and enter into discussion concerning them, or on the other hand reject them as contrary to the right faith, abiding by the faith as laid down by the blessed fathers in council at Nicea.⁷

6. Hefele; *op.cit*; p. 85

7. Theodoret; letters No. CLXVII. *op. cit*; p. 339

The same day of the arrest of the leaders,⁸ Count John wrote to the Emperor about the success he had in solving the dispute by arresting the three leaders. But Count John was favourable to the side of Nestorius. Hence the other side sent a petition to the Emperor complaining against the procedure of Count John, praising Cyril and Memnon and condemning Nestorius and his supporters. This petition argued that Synod of John of Antioch was not in ecumenical Synod in communion with Rome or Africa.

Concerning the Imperial decree, the petition lamented at the fact that the names of John of Antioch and the Pelagian bishops were included among the bishops and the Imperial decree was addressed to them also. The petitioners supposed that this was done by some mischief and deception in the court. They further requested that Cyril and Memnon should be released from their 'prisons' and be allowed to send envoys to the Emperor to give trustworthy accounts of what had happened at Ephesus.

Cyril, too, from his prison, wrote a letter to the clergy and people of Constantinople stating that it was wrong to think— as it was done in the Imperial decree—that Cyril and Memnon were deposed by a Synod; for Cyril and his adherents had not recognized the assembly of John of Antioch as a Synod. Cyril stressed the necessity to present a correct report to the Emperor. He also addressed to the three bishops, Theopemptus, Potamon and Daniel who were sent to Constantinople before the arrival of Count John, a letter seeking their help for his release.

8. The exact date is unknown, probably the beginning of August, 431. A. D.

In a letter dated 13th August, the Bishops in Constantinople expressed their sympathy with their brethren in Ephesus. They have worked for Cyril by "inflaming the minds of many" in his favour. In reply to this letter, the 'Synod' expressed its thanks for the sympathy and requested the bishops to remain in Constantinople. Later its leading bishops requested the clergy present in Constantinople to beseech the Emperor to secure the release of Cyril and Memnon as well as the liberation of all the bishops from Ephesus, which is "like a prison, in which they have been shut up for three months."

The Clergy of Constantinople submitted a request to the Emperors to issue a declaration to the effect that the deposition of Cyril and Memnon was illegal. Probably Dalmatius also made a second attempt to influence the Emperor, and Isidore of Pelusium urged the Emperor to go in person to Ephesus to settle the matters.⁹

Along with these influences, there might have had many other attempts to win over the Emperor. Though both the sides might have attempted to bias the Emperor's decision, Duchesne is of opinion that the friends of Cyril employed the greater activity.¹⁰

9 Isidore, an old friend of Cyril, wrote to Cyril asking him to be moderate. He writes: "Sympathy may not see clearly: but antipathy does not see at all. If you would avoid both these faults, pass no violent sentences, but investigate matters equitably. Many of those at Ephesus accuse you of pursuing a private quarrel; instead of seeking, in an orthodox spirit the things that are Christ's. (Kidd; *op. cit*; p. 252)

10 Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 252 Duchesne states that Cyril had "no scruple in employing the treasures of Egypt in the Service of the 'good' cause."

iv. The deputies summoned:—

Finally the Emperor agreed to summon the deputies from both sides to hear the case again. This was considered as a triumph by the Cyrilline group in Constantinople who felt that they could convince the Emperor to release Cyril and Memnon, and as a whole to get the favour of the Emperor for their stand.¹¹

Eight representatives of each group were summoned. The decree of summons is not extant. However, we have a mandate given to the representatives of Cyril's group when they were selected by the Synod of Cyril to meet the Emperor. It tells about the attitude to be taken by their eight deputies, in regard to the status of their rivals:

..... Before all, you must consent to no communion with John of Antioch and his apostate council, because they have refused in common with us to depose Nestorius because they have been his patrons upto the time of your departure, because they

11 Two views have been expressed concerning the change of attitude of the Emperor. According to Baronius, this change of attitude was due to the defeat of his general Aspar, in his war with the Vandals in Africa. Tillemont, however, says that the defeat in Africa had nothing to do with this; it took place probably in the end of August or later and the news could not have reached Constantinople so soon. The Emperor had taken the unfriendly attitude, according to Tillemont, only due to his ignorance and he changed his attitude, when he was better informed.

have ventured, in opposition to all the canons, to condemn Cyril and Memnon; but especially to this day they defend the doctrines of Nestorius, and besides, many of them are Coelestians (Pelagians) and for this reason are deposed; finally because they have not shrunk from slandering the Synod of the whole world as heretical.¹²

B. THE CONCLUSION OF SYNOD

i. The retirement of Nestorius:—

During the interval between the departure of the deputies of both the parties and their arrival at Chalcedon Nestorius received information from the Emperor to retire to his monastery from where he was brought to Constantinople about three years earlier. This edict was in response to the request which he had made when the deputies were summoned to meet the Emperor. It was a courteous command, drawn up in the name of the prefects. A convoy was provided to escort him to his monastery of St. Euprepus near Antioch and he was allowed to choose the route of his journey either by land or by water. The Emperor expressed his good wishes for his future life, and was confident that with his wisdom he could not lack comfort.

The greatness of the character of Nestorius was evident in the reply which he sent to the above mentioned edict. He did not agitate against it, partly because it was a favourable response to his request, partly because he was a man of the monastic life. He only longed to enjoy again the peace and comfort of his monastery.

12 Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 98. In the list of the deputies the papal legates are named first before Juvenal of Jerusalem.

It is important to realise that it was not a compulsory retirement for Nestorius. Ofcourse, it could be argued, that it was the only way open to him, at that stage. But Nestorius wanted it and gladly accepted it when such a retirement was granted to him by the Emperor. If we give up the prejudice against Nestorius, we are able to see the historical truth that in 431 Nestorius was not banished, but only permitted to retire on his own request.

There can also be seen from Nestorius' reply to the Emperor in which he stated that he was grateful for this sanction which he considered honourable. His main request was to publish the Imperial edict in all churches "in order to the rejection of the false doctrines of Cyril so as to prevent an offence to the simple"¹³

Without hanging on to his exalted ecclesiastical rank, Nestorius retired in peace. But about two decades after this unfortunate controversy, he wrote in his autobiography the following words addressed to Cyril:

..... Because indeed I made no use of the support of the church nor of the support of the chief men nor of the support of the Empire, I am come to this extremity Thou wast bishop of Alexandria and thou didst get hold of the church of Constantiople a thing which the bishop of no other city whatsoever should have suffered.¹⁴

13 Mansi, t. v. p. 793; Hardouin, t. i. p. 1631 quoted from Hefele; **op cit**; pp. 100-I.

14 Nestorius; **Bazaar. op. cit**; p. 146 During the period 431-451 Nestorius suffered a lot from the supporters of Cyril and Dioscorus.

ii Interview at Chalcedon:—

Before the deputies reached Constantinople, the Emperor ordered them to go to Chalcedon¹⁵ and to discuss the matter there. There were two groups in Constantinople, one supporting their Patriarch (Nestorius) and the other supporting Cyril of Alexandria. This disturbance prompted the Emperor to make this last minute change in the programme.

Though documents of this meeting are not preserved, it is understood that the Emperor arrived on 11th September, 431. During the conversations, Acacius of Meletene, from the Cyril's group, made the statement that the God-head was capable of suffering which annoyed the Emperor. So the Antiochenes felt that their triumph was certain. They rejoiced at this and submitted the Nicene Creed, as their declaration of faith. They strongly attacked Cyril and claimed to be the defenders of the orthodox faith. Their profession of faith consisting the Nicene Creed was sent to the forty-two supporters of this group at Ephesus, who promptly returned to the Emperors after having signed it

There were four more sessions with the Emperor. Theodoret and his friends state ¹⁶ that the Emperor ordered them either to reject the chapters of Cyril as contrary to the faith or to be willing to do battle in their behalf and to show in what way they are in agreement with the confession of the Fathers.¹⁷

15 Chalcedon is separated from Constantinople only by Bosphorus strait.

16. In a letter addressed to Bishop Rufus

17. Theodoret; **letter** No. CIXX; **op.cit**; p. 343

The same letter defends the faith of the fathers as follows:

We on the contrary abide in the teaching, and follow in the pious footprints of the blessed Fathers assembled at Nicea and of their illustrious successors, Eusthatus of Antioch, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory, John, Athanasius, Theophilus, Damasus of Rome, and Ambrose of Milan.¹⁸

Perhaps more strange was the following sentence where they accused the followers of Cyril with the same charge with which they have been accused in regard to discipline:

For they have received into communion men excommunicated in various provinces and dioceses. Others lying under the charges of heresy and of the same mind as Celestius and Pelagius, (for they are Euchitae, or Enthusiasts) and therefore excommunicated by their diocesans and Metropolitans, they have in defiance of all ecclesiastical discipline received into communion so swelling their following from all possible quarters, and showing their eagerness to enforce their teaching less by piety than by violence.¹⁹

The Easterners, however did not have much success. From Chalcedon, Theodoret wrote to Alexander of Hierapolis: "Nevertheless as long as I am here I shall not cease

18. *Ibid*; p. 343

19 *Ibid*; p. 343

to serve the interests of this our father; knowing that the impious have done him wrong.”²⁰ The next sentence shows the desire of Theodoret to withdraw from all this controversy:

My desire is that both your piety and I myself get quit of this. No good is to be hoped from it, in as much as all the judges trust in gold and contend that the nature of the Godhead and manhood is one.²¹

As the Emperor could not make a compromise, he abruptly returned to Constantinople inviting the representatives of Cyril to follow him and to consecrate a successor to Nestorius in the vacant see of Constantinople. Maximian, an old priest, was consecrated at Constantinople on October 25, 431.

The Antiochene deputies were neither invited, nor did they dare to follow the Emperor to Constantinople. It was a great disappointment to the Antiochenes who were anticipating a final Synod to end the dispute. The reason of this abrupt ending, according to Duchesne, is one due to the impression created in the Emperor by the presence of the Roman legates in Cyril's Camp.²² The Emperor now decided to support Cyril's side.

iii. The Ephesine Synod dissolved:—

After the retirement of Nestorius and the consecration of his successor, the Emperor dissolved the Synod which he himself had called in the previous year. The edict reads:

20 & 21 *ibid*; p. 341

22 Duchesne; *op. cit* ;p. 254

As you could not be induced to unite with the Antiochenes, and, moreover, would not join in any discussion of the points of difference; I command that the Oriental bishops return to their churches and that the Ephesine Synod dissolve. Cyril too, is to return to Alexandria (to his diocese) and Memnon shall remain bishop of Ephesus.²³

Concerning the Antiochenes whom he had in great respect, he declares:

At the same time we also give it to be known that, as long as we live, we shall not condemn the Orientals, for they have not been confuted in our presence, and no one would dispute with them. Moreover, if you wish for the peace of the church (with the Orientals = Antiochenes), that is, if you will still come to an understanding with them at Ephesus, let me know this immediately: if not, think of your return home.²⁴

The first ones to leave Ephesus were the supporters of Cyril. Everybody was tired and was longing for such an order and Cyril had already—as a matter of fact—‘escaped’ from his prison weeks before the dissolution of the Synod. Probably he had serious doubts about his release, because the Emperor, in a previous edict, had commanded all the members of the Synod to go home except Cyril and Memnon who should remain in prison. Fearing that the

23 Quoted from Hefele; *op. cit.*; p. 210

24 *Ibid*; p. 110

same order would be repeated, Cyril escaped before the arrival of the final edict.²⁵ The only way open to the Antiochenes was to "shake off the dust of their feet"²⁶ and withdraw from the contest.

The Antiochene deputies left Chalcedon after Cyril's supporters had returned home. In their farewell message to the supporters of Nestorius who came from Constantinople to Chalcedon crossing the fearful waves of the River Propontis,²⁷ they accused Cyril and his supporters of being the "hatchers of serpents eggs"²⁸ Though the Easterners were subjected to insults on their return journey,²⁹ they were prepared for a good fight for the sake of the faith of their fathers.

25 Cyril arrived at Alexandria on October 30, 431 A. D. (Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 110) How he managed to escape is only a matter of conjecture. The Antiochenes always accused Cyril for bribing the Court. If their version is correct, Cyril bribed Scholasticus, a eunuch, who was most influential in the court. According to the letter of Accacius of Beroea, written proof of the bribery of Cyril was discovered by the Emperor from the effects of Scholasticus. These payments were arranged through Paul, nephew of Cyril.

26. Theodoret; *op. cit*; p. 341

27. At Chalcedon the Bosphorus opens into the Propontis.

28. Mansi; IV, 1409 B (quoted from Kidd; *op. cit*; p. 252)

29. The Bishops of Ancyra and Ceasaraea treated them as excommunicated. (Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 258)

C THE CONCORDAT OF 433 A. D.

Constantinople, Tarsus and Antioch:—

The dissolution of the Ephesene Synod did not settle the problem. The Antiochenes persisted in what Hefele calls “peculiarly perverse attitude.”³⁰ They could not accept the Cyrilline Synod as the ecumenical Synod, nor could they recognize Maximian as the Patriarch of Constantinople.

Maximian, the newly elected Patriarch, held a “Kind of Synod”³¹ and announced his election and the decrees of Ephesus. In a letter to Cyril he congratulated him on his final victory. At the same time another “Synod” was held in Tarsus in Cilicia under the presidency of John of Antioch, which again pronounced anathema on Cyril and the deputies of Cyril who had consecrated Maximian.

A third “Synod” was held later at Antioch, to repeat the condemnation on Cyril and his adherents. John of Antioch and some others went to Beroea and won over the centenarian Bishop Acacius. Theodoret of Cyrus and others wrote letters to prove the heretical views of Cyril, defending the bishops that had been excommunicated by Maximian. Thus the Eastern bishops increased their opposition to Cyril although Bishop Rabbula of Edessa separated himself and joined the side of Cyril.

ii. Constantinople, Antioch and Alexandria.

On 26th July, 432, Pope Celestine I died and was succeeded by Sixtus III, who immediately tried to restore peace.

30. Hefele; *op.cit*; p. 115

31. *Ibid*; p. 116

in the church. He was willing to accept John of Antioch into the communion of the Church, if he rejected all what was rejected by the Synod of Ephesus.

About the same time the Emperor had a consultation with the new Patriarch of Constantinople and other bishops, and as a result, it was decided to invite John and Cyril to Nicomedia where they should be reconciled. This decision was communicated to John by the hand of the tribune and notary, Aristolaus. The Emperor also wrote to Simeon the Stylites, the famous monk, and to Acacius of Beroea requesting them to pray for the peace.

Though the imperial letter to Cyril is lost, Tillemont supposes that the Emperor had required of Cyril to repudiate his own anathematisms in the same way as he had asked John to repudiate the counter-Anathematisms of Nestorius.³² If this view is correct, it shows that the Emperor wanted to treat both Cyril and Nestorius equally.

Having received the imperial letter, John of Antioch wrote to Alexander of Hierapolis asking him to consult with Theodoret of Cyrus and to bring him to Antioch so that they could make the journey in the place of John; he himself was afraid to do so because of the enemies. Consequently, a Synod was held at Antioch and later in a city in Syria, whose name is not known to us. Great Antiochene Bishops such as Theodoret of Cyrus, Alexander of Hierapolis, Acacius of Beroea, Macarius of Laodicea, Andrew of Samosata were present. The first of the six propositions framed in this Synod survives. It reads:

32 Hefele; *op.cit*; p. 120

That the creed of Nicea must be maintained without any additions and with the rejection of all other explanations, which were given in letters and *chapters* (of Cyril), and only that explanations of it must be accepted which S. Athanasius had drawn up in his letter to Epictetus of Corinth (against Apollinarian)³³

In his reply to Acacius, Cyril expressed his willingness to restore peace, forgiving all the injuries inflicted upon him by the Antiochenes. He also gave a more exact explanation of his twelve anathemas to rebut the false accusations of his opponents. This letter was sent to Antioch through Maximus, an assistant of Aristolaus, hoping that it would persuade the Antiochenes to condemn Nestorius. The Pope as well as other bishops sent letters to Acacius asking for peace.

iii. The Antiochenes divided:—

The letters had their effect in so far as Acacius now asked his friends like Alexander of Hierapolis to condemn Nestorius and to make peace. Alexander replied, however, that Cyril was Apollinarian and in another letter declared that he would rather give up his office or even lose a hand, than have communion with Cyril unless he anathematized his errors, and acknowledged that Christ is God and man, and that He suffered in His manhood.³⁴

The extremist group, in addition to Alexander, consisted of bishops such as Helladius of Tarsus, Eutherus of

33 *Ibid*; p. 121 (Mansi, t. v. p. 829, c. 43; p. 830. c. 54 and p. 840, c. 60; Hardouin, t. i. p. 1634.

Tyana in Cappadocia etc. In the two letters he wrote to John of Antioch and Helladius of Tarsus, Euthérius expressed his feelings strongly against any attempt of reconciliation with Cyril. This group was only a minority however.

As for as Theodoret of Cyrus was concerned, he was happy that Cyril had pronounced anathema upon Apollinarianism. "In return," he was willing to anathematize "these who teach that Christ was a mere man or who divide the one Lord Jesus Christ into two Sons;³⁵ but he would not condemn Nestorius, as demanded by Cyril Andrew of Samosata went one step further expressing his willingness to subscribe to the deposition of Nestorius' if there was no other alternate, on condition that all should not be required to put their signatures to it

Nevertheless, the majority was for reconciliation probably lead by Acacius of Baroea. When John, the Patriarch of Antioch, also joined hands with Acacius, this group was strengthened considerably. John sent Paul of Emesa, an aged bishop, to Alexandria to get further explanations from Cyril. In his letter to Cyril, John asked him to receive and trust his envoy fully as though he himself was present.³⁶ It is supposed that John made it clear that they would never consent to the condemnation of Nestorius.³⁷

In the meantime John tried to convince Alexander of Hierapolis of the orthodoxy of Cyril in the light of the rec-

34. Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 123 (Mansi. t. v. p. 835, 837) sq;

35. *Ibid*; p. 124 (Mansi. t. v. p. 840 sq. c. 61)

36. Mansi; t. v. p. 856 sq (quoted from Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 128)

37. We owe this information to Cyril's archdeacon.

ent explanations, but he was not prepared to accept this point of view. Alexander replied by stating that Cyril was still an Apollinarian, in spite of his new explanations, and that he would never hold communion with those who were reconciled with Cyril of Alexandria. "Cyril offers us communion if we become heretics,"⁸ he declared.

iv. The Union Creed:—

When Paul of Emesa went to Alexandria, he carried with him a creed drawn up by John of Antioch and his friends. The creed reads:

We confess that our Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, true God and true man, consisting of a reasonable soul and a body was begotten before all time by the Father according to the Godhead..... For two natures are united together.....we acknowledge also that the holy Virgin is the God-bearer39

Cyril was happy to accept this formula which he considered to be perfectly orthodox. But Cyril was interested to know the decision of the Antiochenes about Nestorius. In reply Paul anathematized the heresies of Nestorius and presented a written document accepting Maximian as the Patriarch of Constantinople and assenting to the deposition of Nestorius. After doing this, Paul was allowed to receive communion and was invited to preach many times in Alexandria.

38 Eppiphanius, recorded in Mansi. Hefele doubts the truth of it. Hefele; *op. cit.* p. 129

39 Mansi, t. v. p. 303. sqq; Hardouin, t. i. p. 1703
Hefele; *op.cit.* p. 130

At the same time Paul requested that four Nestorians⁴⁰ condemned by Cyril and Maximian must be released; and he insisted that this was an essential condition for the restoration of peace in the East. However, when Cyril expressed his strong opposition to this request Paul dropped it. Cyril furthermore declared, that he was not satisfied with the declaration of Paul of Emesa alone. He insisted that John of Antioch and the other Oriental bishops should condemn Nestorius. Hence Aristolaus sent a letter to the Antiochenes asking them to make the declaration on Nestorius.

v Synod of Antioch (433 A. D.)

The declaration was formulated at a Synod in Antioch, but its contents was probably unfavourable to Cyril. Once again, therefore, Cyril set out to influence the Imperial Court in order to force the Antiochenes to condemn Nestorius. He wrote to Pulcheria, the Praepositus Paulus, the Chamberlain Romanus, and the two court ladies Marcella and Droseria and sent them valuable presents. Presents were sent also to Praepositus Chrysoretus, who was unfavourable to the side of Cyril.⁴¹ As he was not sure

40. Helladius, Eutherius, Himerius, Dorotheus.

41 Hefele thinks that these presents were not enough to satisfy the covetousness of the courtiers (Hefele, *op. cit.*; p. 134) In a letter to Maximian, Cyril asked his friend to do everything in his influence to get his point of view accepted by the Emperor as well as by the Antiochenes. He supplied him with a list of presents which he sent to various people; an indirect request to Maximian to do the same.

of the support of Praepositus Chrysosretus, inspite of the valuable presents, he even tried to have him removed from his office by the help of Pulcheria. Concerning all these efforts Hefele admits that "Cyril put every engine in motion, so as to obtain a victory for the cause of orthodoxy".⁴² It worked in Cyril's favour.

As a consequence Aristolaus, together with Paul of Emesa and two priests from Alexandria now came to Antioch and presented a document for John to sign, in accordance with the agreement reached between Cyril and Paul. John had no difficulty in agreeing to the doctrinal affirmation of the document since these were mainly Antiochene. Under pressure from Aristolaus, however, John also made the costly sacrifice of abandoning Nestorius and accepting Maximian as the Patriarch of Constantinople. This decision was announced by John in his circular letter to his three brother Patriarchs.

Paul of Emesa again went to Alexandria to hand over the letter of reconciliation to Cyril which was received with open arms.⁴³ He did not complain against the alterations made by John. This statement had not made any specification as to the nature of the heresy of Nestorius, if any. The letter of John to the Emperor also was very vague on the point whether Nestorius was a heretic or not.

Cyril announced the glad news to his congregation on April 23, 433 and in the same time sent a reply to John.⁴⁴

42 Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 134

43 Duchesne; *op. cit*; p. 264

This letter of Cyril, called *laetentur Coeli*, is known as the 'Ephesine Creed' and begins with the words: "Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth tremble (with gladness):"⁴⁵ Also Pope Sixtus rejoiced at the success and wrote to Cyril on 11th September, 433 and to John on 15th September expressing his deep satisfaction with the restoration of peace. John communicated the news of the reconciliation to both Emperors, Theodosius II and Valentinian III.

D. SUMMARY

In this chapter, we saw the struggle through which the members of the rival synods of Ephesus of 431 had to pass for the two years after the confusion at Ephesus in 431. Nestorius, who was in retirement in his monastery during this period, was gradually forgotten and forsaken by his Antiochene friends, but this was only a last resort. Under imperial pressure, for the unity and peace of the Empire, it was an inevitable step.

In the reunion of 433, though Antioch was forced to leave Nestorius, the Antiochene theology triumphed. Thus some good came out of this struggle. Cyril had to subscribe to the formula of two natures which helped the

44. It is to be doubted whether Cyril was happy to agree to the Antiochene formula. Duchesne remarks: Aristolos had something besides exhortations in his wallet, and that if the Bishop of Alexandria had not yielded he could have made him regret it. *Libertas* (Brev.8) says that it had been a question of exile. **Ibid**; p. 265)

45. Full text of the English translation is given in Bindley; **op. cit**; pp. 220-223

later affirmation of dyophysite faith at Chalcedon two decades later. The unhappy struggles of this period, therefore, can be seen as a necessary evil which helped to keep the balance between Cyril's christology of one Incarnate Nature and the dyophysite christology of the Antiochenes.

Cyril's willingness to accept this christology as long as Nestorius was condemned, confirms – what we stated earlier – namely that he was more led by personal antagonism than by theological conviction. Even in 433 a complete union did not take place for there were reactions in both groups to the agreement. Among the Antiochenes Theodoret stood a mid-way between John and Alexander his Metropolitan who held a Synod with bishops in Cilicia under Maximin and excommunicated Cyril. These extremists in the Antiochene camp withdrew communion from the Patriarch of Antioch also.⁴⁶ Finally seventeen bishops who refused to accept the reconciliation of John of Antioch as well as their Metropolitan Alexander of Hierapolis, were deposed in April, 433 and banished to the Egyptian mines. Thus the reunion triumphed in the East, but only under great pressure.

In the Cyriline camp, Cyril's acceptance of the Two Natures of Christ was not appreciated by several of his supporters, as for instance, Isidore of Pelusium, and Acacius

46. Euthérius of Tyana and Helladius of Tarsus wrote to Pope Sixtus III, seeking for his co-operation to fight against the reunion of 433. Kidd comments: "They must have lost their heads!" (Kidd; *op. cit.*; p. 263)

of Melitene. They felt that Cyril made far too much concessions and deviated from the strict orthodoxy in agreeing to the Concordat. Why should Cyril subscribe to the formula of Two Natures? – was the question asked in Egypt as well as in Constantinople.

The supporters of Nestorius in Constantinople boasted that Cyril came over to the side of Nestorius. So Cyril had to write to his envoy in the Capital, the priest Eulogius and some others stating that he had not gone back upon his former writings against Nestorius. To his friend Acacius of Melitene, Cyril made it clear that the *Formulary of Reunion* asserted one Christ and not two Christs and it was not, the same as the Nestorian formula.

The reunion of 433 did not satisfy the demands of both parties. Both parties made concession. Though Cyril was considered as the victor of this struggle, he was not very happy with the theology of the *Formulary of Reunion* of 433 A. D. He accepted it, only because there was no other alternate.

V

CHRISTOLOGY OF THE CHURCH OF THE EAST

A THE CHURCH OF THE EAST NOT INVOLVED IN THIS CONTROVERSY

The story of the Councils of Ephesus of 431 A. D. and of Chalcedon of 451 A. D. was unknown to the Church of the East for many years. On the authority of the Syrian writer Mshikha-zkha, Wigram records that "only the faintest echoes of this strife appear to have reached the Church of Assyria."¹ The centre of theological learning in the

1. W. A. Wigram; **An Introduction to the History of the Assyrian Church**, London: S. P. C. K., 1910, p. 135

East at this time was the School of Edessa. In 449 when the notorious *Latrocinium* sent Ibas² into exile, a Syrian theologian named Bar Sauma accompanied him. In 451 however, Ibas was acquitted at Chalcedon and returned to his See together with Bar Sauma. But after the death of Ibas in 457 A. D. Bar Sauma, as well as many others, left Edessa and went into the Persian Empire. It is alleged that it was through Bar Sauma, Nestorianism spread to the Persian Church.

It was only after the fourth ecumenical council, therefore, that the Church of the East began to hear about the Christological controversy. The "Three Chapters" were not yet condemned. Moreover, attention should be drawn to the fact that the Egyptian and Syrian churches had already become Monophysitic at this time. Therefore, when the Church of the East happened to hear the story of Ephesus and Chalcedon, its sympathy fell on the 'side of "the martyr Nestorius" against "the second Pharaoh, Cyril of Egypt."

The Council of Beth Lapat 484 convened by Bar Sauma, Metropolitan of Nisibis, issued a confession of faith which was "dyophysite" in emphasis.³ This canon was quoted and adopted by Gregory the Patriarch of the Church of the East, in his Synod of 605 A. D. Though the Council

2. Ibas was the Bishop of Edessa (435-457) A letter of Ibas, one of the "Three Chapters," which was accepted as orthodox by the fourth ecumenical council was condemned as heretical by the fifth.

3. Being a friend of Ibas, this was expected from Bar Sauma

of 484 was not approved, similar decisions have been taken by the following Synod of the Church of the East in February 486 A. D., in which Bar Sauma was not present. The first canon speaks of two natures of Christ and its "perfect conjoining" (*Nakiepootha Gmirtha*) as well as the Unity of the Person of Christ.

When Emperor Zeno in 489 A. D. ordered the school of Edessa to be closed because of its Nestorian tendencies Bar Sauma founded the School of Nisibis to continue the work carried on by his old School.⁴ Bar Sauma appointed Narsai, former professor at Edessa, as the first head of this theological School.⁵

Synodal pronouncements of the Church of the East on the point of christology were issued in the years 486, 554, 576, 585, 596, 605. However, only after 612 A. D., the term *Parsopa* came into regular use. One thing is beyond any doubt that the Church of the East was not involved in this controversy, or was unaware of all this.

The writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia came to the Church of East through the School of Edessa. When Ibas was the

4. The School of Nisibis played a very significant role in the later history of the Church of the East. Wigram asks: "when we remember how much of the culture of medieval Europe was to come to her through the Saracens and that the "Nestorians" were the teachers of the Saracens, one is set asking whether Oxford, Cambridge and Paris do not owe an unsuspected debt to Bar Sauma though the road.....through Bagdad and Salamanca."
5. The teachings of Narsai are given later in this Chapter

teacher in the School of Edessa, he translated, probably with the help of his pupils, certain works of "the Interpreter; i e., Theodore of Mopsuestia, from Greek to Syriac. The commentary on St. John ⁶ may have been one of these translations. It is also probable that some of his writings e g., the Liturgy attributed to Theodore were translated by Aba, at the time of his pilgrimage ⁷ to the west around the year 536 A. D.

The writings of Diodore seem never to have been translated to Syriac for the simple reason that they were burnt in the 5th century. The writings of Nestorius appeared in Syriac for the first time only around 540 A. D. The Liturgy attributed to Nestorius is believed to have been translated at this time by Mar Aba. Concerning the **Bazaar of Heracleides**, the translation is said to have been done in 535 or 540 A. D. At any rate it is certain that the Nestorian writings reached the distant Church of the East rather late and only gradually.

B. THE THREE CRUCIAL TERMS.

Ever since the Church of the East accepted the Nicene Creed in the Synod of 410 A. D. ⁸ during the reign of Mar Isaac, Catholicos of Seleucia – Ctesiphon, she had the misfortune of developing her theology in Greek thought alien to their Semitic thinking. So far, the Church had the theology of Afraat to build on, but now began to think in Greek

6. Published by Chabot in Syriac in 1897

7. Details of this pilgrimage are given in the next chapter.

8. This Synod met at Seleucia on Epiphany, 410 A. D., attended by forty members and presided over by Marutha, Bishop of Maiperkat.

terms. Wigram describes this as David in Saul's armour. Saul's armour may be excellent for Saul, but not for David.⁹

A short discussion on the Syriac terms, *Kyana*, *Qnoma* and *Parsopa* seems to be inevitable at this point as the Christology of the Church of the East is defined as one *Persopa*, two *Qnome* and two *Kyane*. All the arguments advanced by the Fathers of this church were to illustrate this great christological formula. These words are liable to be easily misunderstood and cleverly misinterpreted.

If Nestorius had difficulty in interpreting his Antiochene thought in terms and expressions understandable to those outside the influence of the 'School of Antioch', the Church of the East had far greater difficulties to explain their Syriac terms in expressions understandable to the western mind. Bethune Baker observes that these terms have played a part in Syriac theological discussions parallel to that played in Greek by *ousis*, *phusis*, *prosopon* and *hupastasis*.¹⁰ The following short discussion is intended to clear away some of the misconceptions concerning the christology of the Church of the East before we look at some of its great theologians.

KYANE

The word *Kyana*¹¹ can be translated to Greek as *phusis* and to English as 'nature'. The author of the Appendix of Bethune Baker's book point out that there are only

9. Wigram; *op. cit*; p. 266

10. Bethune Baker; *Nestorius and his Teaching*, Cambridge University Press, 1908, p. 212

11. *Kyane* is the plural of *Kyana*

Some scholars find a wider application for the word *Kyana* than the Greek *phusis*. Saint Ephraim, e. g. uses the word *Kyana*, to mean *ithya* which means 'Being'. He speaks of a *Kyana* with a *Kyana* meaning "Being. with a nature." He uses *ithya* only to God; for other beings he uses the word *Kyana*. The author of the Appendix quoted above writes.

two places ¹² in New Testament where *Kyana* is not translated as *phusis*.

Where we should speak of material things as "Substances," a Syrian would call them "nature". Thus "oil is a liquid substance" would be oil is a liquid nature.¹³

Solomon of al-Basra,¹⁴ a writer of the Church of the East, explains:

Darkness is a *Kyana* which subsists of itself; and if it were not a *Kyana* it would not have been numbered with the seven *Kyana* which were created in the beginning in silence. Others say the darkness is not a *Kyana* that subsists of itself, but the shadow of bodies.¹⁵

Out of the three terms discussed in this section, *Kyana* is the least controversial. In the later discussion of the christology of the Church of the East, only the other two words posed the problem of being misunderstood and misinterpreted.

12. 1 Cor. 15:38 and James 1:21

13. Bethune Baker; *op. cit*; p. 218

14. He lived early in the thirteenth century

15. *Book of the Bee* ed. Budge; p. 16 (quoted from Bethune Baker; *op. cit*; p. 218)

QNOMA

Qnoma is translated into Greek as *hupastasis*. The English word *hypostasis* is a transliteration of the Greek word. Many of the supporters of Nestorius at present hold that there is no adequate equivalent to this word in other languages. Whatever words we may find in other languages it fails to convey the exact meaning of the original Syriac word. Even in Syriac this word has been used in different meanings.

The Peshitta New Testament uses *Qnoma* to mean 'self' with one exception of Hebrews 10:1. In the Gospel of Mathew, 5:34, in the old Syriac Manuscript this word is used to mean the Greek *holos*. Aphraat, the Syrian author used this word to mean "self" and Ephraim used it to mean "subsistency" or "reality." Mar Bawai,¹⁶ another Syrian theologian defines it as being "the specialisation of ousia, the set of natural characteristics, as they exist in the individual."¹⁷

According to Ishoyahh III of the seventh century *Qnoma* has the meaning of "naturehood" (*Kianootha* *Kianutha*,¹⁸ and that meaning only. It stands steadfast in the simple expression of that essential meaning, and all that we mean by "naturehood" is demonstrably included

16. For the teachings of Mar Bawai, see later.

17. Wigram; *op. cit*; p. 283

18. *Kianutha* comes from the word *Kiana*

in it. It does not admit of subtraction from or addition to, its meaning.”¹⁹

The Syriac Dictionary of J. Payne Smith gives the meaning of *Qnoma* as hypostasis, substance, actual existence, person, individual self etc. She, however, states that Nestorians distinguish between the *Qnoma* (hypostasis) and *Parsopa* prosopon. She further translates the Nestorian Christological formula as “Christ is two natures and two Qnumi united in the person of the Son.”²⁰

Bethune Baker and Wigram think that *autos* may be almost invariably the Greek rendering of it. Sometimes *Qnoma* and *ithutha* are used as synonyms in Syriac. The Syrians spoke of three *Qnome* in Trinity which corresponds to a well known use of hypostasis in Greek. The Church of the East teaches three *Qnome* in the Trinity and two *Qnome* in Christ: three *Parsope* in the Trinity and one *Parsope* in Christ. Western scholars may find an inconsistency here. But we have to understand the distinction they make when they speak of the *Qnome* of Christ which is not exactly as the *Qnome* of Trinity. Mar Avdeesho of the 14th century.²¹ denies any idea of “four persons” in the Trinity; although it may look as if that the teaching of two *Qnome* in Christ and three *Qnome* in the Trinity logically leads to the idea of ‘four persons’ in God. He states:

19. Isho-Yabh; Letters. 2, 6, p. 131 Duval (quoted from Wigram; op. cit; pp. 284-5) See also Budge; **Book of Govtrnors** Vol. II cxxxix

20. J. Payne Smith; **A Compendious Syriac Dictionary** Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, p. 510

21. A detailed discussion of his theology is given later in this chapter.

If we maintained two Sons in Christ, this charge might justly be brought against us; because the Father and Spirit, with these two Sons, would make four persons. But seeing that we confess but one Son, one Christ; one *Parsopa*, we have no fear of being guilty of blasphemy.²²

To make the distinction between *Qnoma* and person clear in the English language, therefore, "concrete nature" is here translated with the word *Qnoma*, when it is used in relation to the *Qnoma* of Christ.

PARSOPA

Parsopa is the Syriac word for the Greek *prosopon*. The original meaning is face, visage, countenance. It is also used in classical Greek as an equivalent to a mask, and so for a *dramatic part* or character. Other classical usage are front, outward appearance and beauty. When used to denote a person, it is always simply the person and not the inner *ego* or personality.

In the New Testament and other earlier writings this word is translated always in the sense of face or appearance with the possible exception of Jude ¹⁶. According to Wigram *Parsopa* is used by the Assyrians to mean "real presence" which is nearer to 'person' than "appearance"²³

22. Avdesho; **Marganeetha**, Part III Ch. Vii quoted from George P. Badger; **Nestorians and their Rituals**, London: Joseph Masters, 1852, p. 402

23 Wigram; **op. cit.**; p. 279

Mar Isho Yabh III, Patriarch of the Church of the East, in 8th century writes to a friend:

For Parsopa, O brother, is that which distinguishes the *Qnoma*, and it has a great variety of ideas connected with it and has a ready aptitude for being bartered and exchanged, and, as I have said, it contains a complex idea.²⁴

Nestorius himself asks Cyril, "Dost thou wish to regard a hypostasis as a prosopon?"²⁵ This must have been a starting point for reconciliation. Isho-Yabh, the Patriarch of the Church of the East, writes to Sahdona, denying vehemently the possibility of identifying *Parsopa* with *Qnoma*. Ishoyabh writes:

When you use a word, you cannot make it mean just what you want it to, and these two terms have special meanings of their own.....*Parsopa*, I grant, can be interpreted in various ways, but *Qnoma* is a word of one interpretation only namely 'naturehood' (*Kianutha*), and it sticks to the simple expression of its essential meansynonyms. Much more are *Qnoma* and *Kiana*, and this idea of yours thrusts you straight into the pit of (Monophysite) heresy.²⁶

The statement that the Nestorian christological formula is "two natures, two persons, and one *Parsopa*" is inaccurate and misleading. In this essay, at any rate, as *Qnoma* has found a better and satisfactory word other than 'Person' the Syriac word *Parsopa* is consistently translated as nothing but 'person.'

24 Quoted from Bethune Baker; **op. cit.** p. 230

25 Nestorius; **Bazaar** **op. cit.** p. 156

26 Isho-Yabh; Letter. 7.p. 131. Quoted from Wigram; **op. cit.** p. 305

C. THE GREEK DOCTORS

The Church of the East considers Diodors of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius as the three Greek theologians whose teachings are in line with the right understanding of christology. This high regard for these Greek fathers have made other churches suspicious of the theological stand of the Church of the East. As both Diodore and Theodore died before the outbreak of the Nestorian controversy, it is enough to discuss the christology of Nestorius only in this chapter?²⁷

In 428 A. D., Nestorius began to attack the title 'Theotokos'. This title can be called the watchward of the Nestorian controversy. Though it is often translated into English as the Mother of God, the correct rendering is "God - bearer." Nestorius opposed the title Theotokos and suggested Christotokos because the former title is unknown to the fathers or Apostles. Nestorius writes: "First prove unto us that the Fathers called her the mother of God."²⁸

There is a tendency to quote these words as an example of the ignorance of Nestorius. Even the sympathetic writer Vine comments: "Nestorius does not help himself much by taking up this point."²⁹ Similarly Socrates, a contemporary, states: "Nestorius therefore appears ignorant of the works of the ancients on which account, as I said, he shunned the special term."³⁰

There are two possibilities of interpreting this apparent "ignorance." One, of course, is to say that Nestorius

27. For Diodore and Theodore see chapter I

28. Nestorius; **Bazaar**; *op. cit*; p. 220

29. A. R. Wine; **An Approach to Christology**, London: Independent Press Ltd, 1948, p. 458.

30. Socrates; *op. cit* p. 171

was not aware of the use of this term by the Fathers. The second possibility is to say that the theologians who used this title were not considered as 'Fathers' at the time of Nestorius.

The Theologians who used this title were Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Archelaus of Kashkar, Alexander of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Naziansus and Gregory of Nyssa. At that time, however, the term "Father" was used first of all about the Apostolic Fathers. The consensus of opinion among the scholars is that the Apostolic Fathers included men like Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp, and, sometimes also Barnabas, Hermas and Papias. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, however, were considered Fathers, but none of them used the title Theotokos. This must be said in favour of Nestorius' proposition.

Today we regard Origen, Athanasius, the three Cappodocians etc. as Fathers; but Nestorius could hardly be expected to do so. He lived at a time which was very close to the period of these theologians. Gregory of Nazianzus for instance, was only a predecessor in his See, like himself and not a Father in the sense in which Polycarp or Ignatius was venerated. By 'Fathers,' Nestorius must have looked to a period prior to Origen or he can have meant the Fathers of the Nicene Council.

Another objection which Nestorius had maintained was the fact that Theotokos often gave expression to the word "*Meter Theou*" which explicitly meant nothing but the 'Mother of God', and much more dangerous than 'Theotokos.' Even Cyril used '*Meter Theou*' in some cases. Cyril's defence of '*Meter Theou*', and the subsequent

explanation leads to an understanding which is entirely unsatisfactory and dangerous to the doctrine of Incarnation. To Nestorius, Cyril's explanations sounded as dangerous as Apollinarianism.

The danger of Patripassionism was also seen in the use of this title. If God has a mother, why not God die? To avoid such undesirable developments in the christian doctrines, Nestorius opposed the title Theotokos, Though Cyril showed only tendencies of reviving Patripassionism, Nestorius was afraid that one day somebody would proclaim the death of God. One writer is sounding the alarm in his statement: "By slow degrees it (calling Mary "Theotokos") is paving the way to the Temple of Diana of Ephesus.³¹ Nestorius was hesitant to adopt a title which was not used in the Holy Bible as well as in the Creeds such as Nicene Creed etc.

Nestorius defended the "Prosopic union" rejecting the 'hypostatic union' or the natural union as propounded by Cyril. Nestorius asks his opponent:

What is the unintelligible *hypostatic* union? Or how shall we accept it, the unintelligible? Or how hast thou understood it? How is it raised up through incomprehensible? and again, unseemly? Instruct us. But thou art not willing to instruct me.³²

Ousic union is natural union, because ousia and nature are inseparably corelative. Hypostatic union is also the same as the ouxic union, for hypostasis is simply ousia,

31 George; **op. cit**; p. 38

32 Nestorius; **Bazaar**; **op. cit**; p. 155

except in Trinitarian usage, where it is *ousia* in a certain phase. Nestorius argues that *ousia* and nature of Godhead, which includes its three hypostases, cannot be supposed to enter into ousic, natural or hypostatic union with any other *ousia*.

Concerning the hypostatic union, Nestorius says further:

Say therefore (what) the *hypostatic* union (is). Dost thou wish to regard a *hypostasis* as a *prosopon*, as we speak of one *ousia* of the divinity and three hypostases and understand *prosopa* by hypostasis? Thou callest therefore the prosopic union *hypostatic*; yet the union was not of the *prosopa* but of the natures..... What other *hypostatic* union, then, dost thou wish to teach me, which consists in a supreme and divine and ineffable union? I know not unless (it be that) of one *prosopon* where the one is the other and the other the one.³³

The main proposition of Nestorius for 'prosopic union' was based on two arguments.

1. Divine and human *ousiai* being entirely different things, they must remain so in the union of them in Christ, if He is to be perfect God and perfect man. If either of the two natures undergo change, one or other will not be there at all. A fusion of these natures will create some new kind of being neither divine nor human.

2. The union must be voluntary in both sides. No nature could dominate the other against the will.

33. *Ibid*; pp. 156-7

In his proposition of prosopic union, Nestorius maintained three kinds of unity.

- i. Unity of the Persons in the Trinity
- ii. Unity of the soul and body in man
- iii. Unity of Godhead and manhood in Christ.

Summing up the criticisms against natural union, Nestorius writes:

Therefore the words of the Divine Scriptures befit not Christ in any other manner than this; but as we have examined and found, all refer not to the union of the nature but to the natural and hypostatic *prosopon*.³⁴

D. **MAR NARSAI** (d. 503 A. D.)

“The Harp of the Holy Spirit”³⁵ of the Church of the East was a greater thinker than his Metropolitan Bar Sauma who brought Narsai from Edessa to Nisibis to be the first Principal of the new theological college. Much of the theological achievements of the patriarchate of Mar Babai (497–502) owes its credit to Narsai. As a matter of fact there were no official confessions published by the Church of the East for about seventy years after the year 486. Though personal utterances of an individual, the poems of Narsai still exercise a tremendous influence in the Church of the East.

34. Nestorius; **Bazaar**; *op. cit*; p. 86. The last portion is ambiguous. Henry Chadwick has written a marginal note in his personal copy, that it is a late gloss, not earlier than 7th century.

35. This is the title given by the Church of the East. The Monophysites called him the ‘leper’

Needless to say that Narsai is anti-Cyrilline, like all the supporters of Nestorius. He writes:

Said Cyril, "why does he not call Mary
Mother of the Godhead'?"

She who bore essential being in fleshy wise, in that
He became flesh.³⁶

He explains the two natures of Christ in the following poem:

Blame the evangelists, if blame you must, For their
books express the distinction of the Word and the Body.

Nay, even our Lord lies under their rebuke, who showed
in His body the print of nails and smiting spear.

He and His disciples made the distinction manifest,
Declaring the nature of essential being and the nature
of man³⁷

Concerning controversial term *Qnoma*, he writes:

Heretics say: "the Word was changed, and
became flesh as it is written;
He did not take a body from Mary,
but His *Qnoma* became flesh."

It was not that the Word was changed, and became
flesh in His *Qnoma*, But the Word clad Himself
with flesh that in it He might set us mortals free.
It was not that the **W**ord was changed, but that

36 Narsai; Mimra. x: 267 (Cf. Wigram, **op. cit.**; p.271)

37 **Ibid**; Mimra. x.414 (Cf. Wigram; **op.cit**; p.271)

He took manhood; The manhood underwent birth, growth, thirst, hunger, and death in due time.³⁸

Though Narsai spoke of the two distinctive natures, he was careful to avoid the notion of two Sons or two persons in Christ. He writes: "Let not the reader think, in reading 'Man', that I mean two Sons, for the Son is one indeed."³⁹

A student of Narsai is attracted more often to the peculiarity of his style, especially when he writes in his favourite twelve – syllabic metre. A special *Kanona*⁴⁰ on the distinctive actions of the two concrete and abstract natures of Christ has added further doubts in the minds of the students of Christology. This beautiful poem of great literary achievement of Narsai is appreciated by the supporters of Narsai, but criticized by those who are opposed to the christology of the Church of East. After explaining his christology as one *Parsopa*, two *Qnome* and two *Kiane*, Narsai sings:

38. *Ibid*; Mimra xl. 17 (Cf. Wigram; *op. cit*; p. 271)

39. *Ibid*; (Cf. Wigram; *op. cit* p. 272) These and many, other passages of Narsai; can be cited to prove the opposite of what Narsai was trying to emphasize. In some cases he had to overstate matters. That was the reason why this theological star of first magnitude was not accepted by the western church. Some of his overstatements, however, were necessary to defend the faith and in many cases he guarded the truth against the Eutychian tendencies. Wigram is right in pointing out that no statement of Narsai is more emphatically 'Nestorian' than those in the *De Incarnatione* of St. Athanasius of Alexandria." (Wigram; *op. cit*; p. 273)

40. A short prayer of thanksgiving and praise.

Thus does all the Church of the Orthodox confess; thus also have the approved doctors of the church taught, Diodorus, and Theodorus, and Mar Nestorius. He was laid in a manger and wrapped in swaddling – clothes, as Man; and the watchers extolled Him with their praises, as God. He offered sacrifices according to the Law, as Man; and received worship from the Persians, as God He kept the law completely, as Man; and He gave His own new Law as God... . He bore His Cross upon His shoulder, as man; and He revealed and announced the destruction of Zion, as God... . He cried out upon the cross ‘My God; My God’, as Man; and He promised Paradise to the thief, as God.. 41

E. MAR BAWAI THE GREAT (569–628)

The author of the “*Book of the Union*” is considered an orthodox theologian even by those who do not belong to the Church of the East. In this book, Mar Bawai⁴² rejected not only the Council of Ephesus but also

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41. The complete text is given in R.H. Connolly; **The Liturgical Homilies of Mar Sai**; English translation texts and studies, vol. VIII, Cambridge: University Press, 1909, pp. 14–15. An elaboration of this poem is found in the Syriac book known as **khudra** and an English translation is given in Badger; *op.cit*; pp. 35–38
42. The Abbot of Mount Izla should not be confused with Mar Bawai, in whose patriarchate the Church of the East is said to have accepted a definite ‘Nestorian’ doctrine in 497 A. D. Mar Bawai the Great never became a patriarch.

the Council of Chalcedon. He denied the title *Theotokos* and venerated the three Greek Doctors, viz, Diodore, Theodore and Nestorius. He disagreed not only with the Monophysites, but also with the Khenanians.⁴³

Mar Bawai is held mainly responsible for the formula of "two Qnome"⁴⁴ In *De Unione*, he writes:

We apply the term *hypostasis* to the particular substance, (*ousia*) which subsists in its own single being numerically one and separate from the rest; not in so far as it is individualized, but in so far as, if it belong to a class of things created, rational, and free, it receives various properties *Hypostasis* is invariable in respect of its own nature and in its kind (*eidos*), for the nature of the *hypostasis* is common to it and to all like *hypostasis*..... ..As to *person*, it is that characteristic of the *hypostasis* which distinguishes it from other *hypostasis*..... ..And because the particular characteristic which the *hypostasis* possess is not the *hypostasis* itself, the term *person* is used of that which makes the distinction.⁴⁵

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43. Khenanians were the followers of Khenana, who became the head of the school at Nisibis and advocated the christology of one *Qnoma* in Christ.
44. Wigram points out that Mar Bawai was practically the Patriarch when "two qnome" was adopted in the Church. (Wigram; *op.cit*; pp. 283-284)
45. Bawai; *De Unione*. Ch.XX. *apud* J. Labourt; *Le Christianisme dans l'empire perse*. pp. 283-5; (quoted from Bethune Baker; *op.cit*; pp. 228-9)

The following anthem written by Mar Bawai⁴⁶ expresses the attitude of the Church of the East concerning Virgin Mary as well as the union of two natures of Christ:

Blessed be the compassionate One, who has graciously sustained our life by the prophecies; for Isaiah saw, with the eye of his mind, the wonderful Virgin-born; and Mary brought forth Emmanuel, the Son of God, without marriage, He being formed of her by the Holy Ghost, (as it is written) to be an adorable abode and temple for the rays of the father, in one Filiation; which (body) at the commencement of His wonderful conception, He united to Himself in one honour,...One is the Messiah, adored by all in two Natures, who, as touching His Godhead, is begotten of the Father without beginning, and before all ages; and, as touching His Manhood, was born of Mary, in the fulfilment of time, as body of union. His Godhead is not from the substance of His Mother, neither His Manhood from the substance of His Father; but the Natures and *Qnome* subsist in the one *Parsopa* of this one Filiation⁴⁷

The last line of this anthem repeats the assertion that the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ is indivisible and inseparable. It concludes:

46 This anthem is used from the first Sunday in Advent until Epiphany, during the morning services in the Church of the East.

47 Badger; *op. cit*; pp. 33-4 Badger does not say that Mar Bawai is the author of this anthem, probably, not knowing the author.

Therefore, O Lord, we worship Thy Divinity and Thy Humanity, without dividing them; for the power of the Father; Son, and the Holy Ghost, one, the sovereignty is one, the will is one, and the glory is one. ⁴⁸

F. MAR AVDEESHO METROPOLITAN (D. 1318)

The famous canonist and theologian of the Church of the East ⁴⁹ attempted to explain the official christology of the church in his little book, *Marganeetha*, or 'Jewel'. Concerning the Council of Chalcedon, he records his satisfaction, because this Council confirmed the confession of two natures in Christ. According to him, the Council of Chalcedon confessed one *Qnoma* in Christ, because in Greek there was no difference between the meaning of the words *Qnoma* and *Parsopa*. ⁵⁰ He was not willing to be called a Nestorian, nor did he admit that there was any departure in the christology of the Church of the East, from the faith of the Fathers. ⁵¹

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48. He is known as Ebed-Jesus Sobensis or Abhdisho or Abdyeshu etc. Avdeesho is the East Syrian pronunciation. The word means "Servant of Jesus." He was Metropolitan of Nisibis when he codified the canon law of the Church of the East. He is recognized as the last great scholar and theologian of this church in addition to being the last famous poet in the East Syrian literature.
50. Jewel, Part III, Ch IV (See Badger; *op. cit*; Appendix P. 399)
51. He argued: "As to the Easterns, however, because they never changed their faith, but kept it as they received it from the Apostles; they were unjustly styled 'Nest-

The Church of the East has refused to excommunicate Nestorius, he says, when called upon to do so, because it would be equivalent to the excommunication of the Sacred Scriptures and holy Apostles. He also quotes another father of the same church namely Mar Yokhannan Bar Pinkhaye who has drawn the name of Christ with red ink and black ink as follows.⁵²

CHRIST

Behold Corruption! behold Confusion! Is it red ink? It is not. Is it black ink? It is not.

CHRIST

Now look at this. behold beauty! behold light! Is it black ink? It is. Is it red ink? It is.

Mar Avdeesho concludes the 5th chapter of Part III of *Marganeetha* by affirming his faith that Christ existed in two natures and in two *Qnome* and “whosoever” shall dispute

orians’ since Nestorius was not their Patriarch, neither did they understand his language; but when they heard that he taught the doctrine of the two Natures..... Nestorius, then, followed them and not they him, and that more especially in the matter of the appellation ‘Mother of Christ’ (Jewel, Part III. Ch. VI (quoted from Badger; *op. cit*; p. 400)

52. *Ibid*, Part III. Ch. V (quoted from Badger, *op. cit*; p. 401)

these testimonies is far removed from all truth.⁵³ He also refuted the title Theokos, and among the three arguments⁵⁴ advanced against the use of this title, the third one is an illustration of the bitter antagonism of some against this title:

Thirdly: If Mary is the 'Mother of God', and Peter testifieth of Him whom she brought forth, saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God;" then, according to you, she is not the Mother of Christ, but the mother of His Father and Christ is her grandson, not her son, and she is therefore mother Christ?⁵⁵

G. SUMMARY

From the foregone pages of this chapter it is clear that the christology of the Church of the East is in line with the Christology of the "three Greek Doctors." which is sufficient justification for the veneration of them in the Church of the East. On the annual memorial day of these Doctors, an anthem is recited in the Church of the East:

Woe and woe again to all who say that Mary is the mother of God, who do not confess Christ in two natures, two hypostases, and one *Parsopa* of filiation. Woe and woe again to the wicked Cyril and Severus.⁵⁶

53. *Ibid*; Part III. Ch. V (quoted from Badger; *op.cit*; p. 401)

54. Part III. Ch. VI. is fully devoted to condemn this title

55. *Ibid*; Quoted from Badger; *op.cit*; p. 401

56. Quoted from Badges; *op. cit*; p. 80

This Church is opposed to Cyril and Severus because of her opposition to the teaching of 'One Incarnate Nature' and also because of the personal enmity of Cyril against Nestorius.⁵⁷ The Christology of Narsai, Bawai, Avdeesho, etc. is the affirmation of a single Person of Jesus Christ in two hypostases and two natures. It has two emphases: One is to affirm the divinity of Christ against Arian heretics and the second is to present to mankind a Christ who suffered as a human being; thereby showing an example for all the mankind.

The christology of the Church of the East, therefore neither teaches the duality of the Person of Christ, nor is it a denial of the divinity of Christ. According to custom, though not by obligation, when the believers enter the churches, they advance to kiss the cross placed on the table in the east end of the church, repeating this confession: "O Lord, we worship thy divinity, and thy humanity without dividing them."

The non-use of the title 'Theotokos' is not a denial of the divinity of Jesus Christ as alleged by the enemies of Nestorius. While abstaining from the exp-

57. An Anglican missionary working among the Assyrians in the beginning of this century, was surprised to 'discover what he calls "a most wildly unhistorical account of the Council of Ephesus."' (archbishops' **Assyrian Mission quarterly paper**, London: S. P. C. K. Jan. 1913)

ression 'Mother of God', the Church of the East is perfectly happy with the expression 'Mother of Christ who is God and Man'. The Church of the East venerates Mary addressing many prayers to her requesting her to pray for them.⁵⁸ It is clear, therefore, that the church of the East neither denies the divinity of Christ, nor belittles the importance of Mary, by abstaining from the use of this ambiguous and very controversial title Theotokos.

58. However, they never ask her to grant their requests as she has no such authority, (A. J. Maclean; **East Syrian Daily Offices**, London: Rivington, Percival & Co. 1893, P. XIX)

VI

THE ATTITUDE OF OTHER CHURCHES

A THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ATTITUDE

The Roman Catholic attitude today towards Nestorianism seems to be sympathetic rather than antagonistic. The account of the Council of Ephesus of 431 A. D. in the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* is a sufficient example in evidence of the above statement. About Nestorius it writes:

Nestorius, as well as Theodore, repeatedly insisted that he did not admit two Christs or two Sons and he frequently asserted the unity of the prosopon ¹

In spite of all the adverse criticism to show that Nestorius taught two Christs, the above author affirms: "It will probably be only just to Nestorius to admit that he fully intended to safeguard the unity of subject in Christ."²

1. John Chapman; "Nestorius," *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 10 New York: The Gilmary Society, 1913, p. 756

2. *Ibid*; p. 757

The Church of the East isolated as it was from western Christendom, was free from any direct hostility on the part of the Church in the west. The first Assyrian to come to the Western Church after the christological controversy was Aba³ around the year 534. He went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, visiting Egypt, Greece and Constantinople, and it is recorded that he stayed at Constantinople for an year, along with his teacher Thomas from Edessa. Both these Assyrians spent their time in teaching until the accession of the Monophysite Patriarch Anthimus in 535.

It is believed that these two "Nestorians" must have received communion at Constantinople.⁴ Aba, who was a good theologian, undoubtedly explained the christology of the Church of the East to his hosts at Constantinople. If they were allowed to work in Constantinople, it could be reasonably argued that in the sixth century the Western Church did not condemn the Church of the East.⁵

Another incident from the same century supports our contention that the Church of the East was not considered Nestorian at that time. In 585 A. D. the Patriarch of the Church of the East, Isho Yab I (d. 596). made an embassy to the Emperor Maurice during the wars of Persians with the Romans. When the emperor asked the Patriarch "what is your faith in the Persian Church? Since the time of the Council of Chalcedon, we have heard nothing whatever

3. Aba was a convert from Zoroastrianism who later became the Patriarch of the Church of the East.

4. See Wigram; *op. cit*; p. 185

5. The statement that Aba was expelled from Constantinople for refusing to anathematize Theodore of Mopsuestia, is unsupported by historical evidence, wherefore Wigram also ignores it. (Wigram; *op. cit*; p. 185 footnote)

about you.” Isho Yab wrote a confession and submitted to the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch which was accepted by them as absolutely orthodox.⁶ It was at this time the Church of the East first heard of the condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was considered as the greatest ‘Interpreter’ of them.⁷

In 1287 Rabban Sauma, a monk of the Church of the East visited Rome, an incident of great significance to our study. One author calls the experiences of this monk a document of incomparable importance for the religious history of the Mongol empire and its relations with Western Christendom.”⁸

The background of the visit was this: In 1273 the Mongol king, Abaga, had sent his envoys to the Council of Lyons, where they were present at the Act of Union between the Eastern and the Western Churches on 6th July, 1274. After three years he sent six envoys to England with apologies to Edward I for his failure to give adequate support to him when he was in Palestine. This was followed up by Argun, son of Abaga, who in 1286 sent the most

6. Ibid; pp, 215-6

7. Both these instances are included here to show the Catholic attitudes towards the Church of the East. Though they are related with Constantinople, there was no separation of the Church of Constantinople from the Church of Rome prior to 1054 A. D.

8. Christopher Dawson; **The Mongol Mission**, London: Sheed and Ward, 1955, p. xxix

important of all the Mongol embassies to the West.⁹ This mission reached Rome in 1287 soon after the death of Honorius IV and stayed in Western Europe for about an year, visiting Philip IV of France and Edward I of England and the newly elected Pope Nicholas IV. This mission is more significant to us because of the ecclesiastical unity it exhibited.

Rabban¹⁰ Sauma, the leader of this embassy was a Chinese monk and the friend of the only Chinese Patriarch of the Church of the East.¹¹ As the Pope was dead, the Cardinals discussed the matters of faith with this Chinese Christian. After reciting the Creed of Nicea, as it is used in the Church of the East, Sauma explained his Christology as 'two natures, two *Qnome* and one person'.

There is no evidence to believe that the Christology of Rabban Sauma was examined and approved by the Cardinals. As a matter of fact the purpose of the mission of Rabban Sauma was not a doctrinal one. He came as a political ambassador.

9 Details of this mission are seen in the biography of Rabban Sauma translated by E. A. T. W. Budge with the title "**The Monks of Kublai Khan**"

10 Rabban is a Syriac word for a monk or an abbot.

11 Mar Yaballah III, became Patriarch in 1281. His former name was Markos. His history is also seen in "**The Monks of Kublai Khan.**"

When Rabban Sauma celebrated the Liturgy in the presence of the English king at Gascony, he received communion from this Chinese Nestorian. More significant than this is the fact that Sauma was allowed to celebrate the East Syrian Liturgy in Rome. Moreover, he received communion from Pope.¹² Fortescue remarks that this is the only time a Nestorian has ever received communion from the Pope. If the Christology of the Church of the East was defective, the Pope would not have allowed Sauma to communicate. When the Liturgy of the Church of the East¹³ was celebrated in the presence of the Pope and the Cardinals, they remarked: "The language is different, but the rite is the same." Fortescue, who is an orthodox Roman Catholic, tries to explain this by saying that "clearly they were no great scholars in liturgy."¹⁴

Vine remarks; "During all this neither Pope nor Cardinals seem to have realised that Rabban Sauma was a heretic and a schismatic!"¹⁵ This, then, is one of the most curious episodes of the later history of the Church of the East, and the Roman Catholic Church; although it is not, in any way, a standard of the Roman Catholic attitude towards the Church of the East.¹⁶

12. Nicholas IV, (1288-1292)

13. The Liturgy of Addai and Mari

14. A. Fortescue: **The Lesser Eastern Churches**, London: Catholic Truth Society, 1913, P. 99

15. A. R. Vine, **The Nestorian Churches**, London: The Independent Press, 1937.P.153

16. It is impossible to expect the present Pope to endorse the letter of his predecessor - Nicholas IV to the Nestorian patriarch.

When the unfortunate split in the Church of the East took place after the death of their Patriarch in 1551, the Roman Catholic Church got a chance to remove 'the errors from the Church of the East. John Sulaka who was ordained as the first Chaldean "Uniat" Patriarch on April 9, 1553 by Pope Julius, made a catholic profession of faith. The Chaldean Uniates have renounced Nestorius and the other two Greek Doctors, In addition to the adoption of the title "Theotokos"

The Syro-Malabar Christians in India seems to share the same view of the Chaldeans in the Middle East. The background of the Syro-Malabar rite of India is also 'Nestorian' before the arrival of the Portuguese. They too adopted 'Theotokos' and rejected Nestorius, Theodore and Diodore. In spite of all this, they respect Narsai, Bawai and other fathers of the Church of the East. A theologian of this church admitted¹⁷ that the teaching of the Church of the East that there are two *Qnome* in our Lord in addition to the two *Kiane* is perfectly orthodox. He does not find any actual error in the teaching of the Church of the East on the point of Christology. His church still uses the two liturgies attributed to Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius, changing the titles as the "*Second Hallowing*," and "*Third Hallowing*" respectively. He thinks that separation from the Catholic Church is the great error, and the only major error, of the Church of the East.

The attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards the Church of the East is one of sympathy. One Roman Catholic author concludes his account of the Church of the East in glorious terms with the following statement: "That they have kept the Christian faith for thirteen centuries of

17 In a personal interview with the present writer.

tragic isolation gives them a right to all our respect and affection,"¹⁸ He is only asking them to "come out of that other fold back to the one flock." "Only, to do that they must accept Ephesus and call the mother of their Lord by her right name," he adds.¹⁹ Like many other Romane Catholics, Fortescue thinks that schism, rather than heresy, is the main error of the Church of the East.

B. MARTIN LUTHER, THE REFORMER

The effect of the Reformation on our understanding of the Christology of the Church of the East cannot pass unnoticed. The Church of the East came to hear about the Reformation only in the 19th century from the western missionaries who came to work among them.

The significant feature of the Reformation, in its relation to the Nestorian Christology, is the refusal by the Reformers to use the non-biblical title Theotokos. Contemporary Protestants may not be aware of this and some might even be willing to accept the title. The Reformers, however, realised that Nestorius was right in attacking Theotokos and defending Christotokos. Thus the word Theotokos disappeared from the Protestant churches and their liturgies.

About the lack of understanding of those who condemned Nestorius, Martin Luther says:

And their writings are so confused that I think they themselves do not know, to the present day why they condemned Nestorius. Observe that they admit that Nestorius held Christ for God and

18 Fortescue; *op.cit*; p. 158

19 *Ibid*

man; only he is said to have made two Persons of Him. From this it is certain that Nestorius did not hold Christ for a mere man, as we all thought, since he also holds Him for God, as their own words say.²⁰

Luther exposed the folly of the argument that Nestorius divided the personality of Christ, as follows:

It is sure, however, that Nestorius did not believe that there were two Christs, but only one single Christ, as their own words imply, when they say that Nestorius held Christ, viz., the one, same, real Christ and no other, to be two persons.²¹

Luther continues this statement with a vehement attack on the Roman Catholic accounts of Nestorius:

So, too, it is not written anywhere in the histories that Nestorius held Christ to be two Persons, except that the Popes and their histories make that quibble; though even they themselves admit that the imagine that Nestorius taught that after His birth from Mary, Christ became God, or was united to God in one Person. Their conscience or misunderstanding forced them to this; since they have to admit that Nestorius did not teach that there was more than one single Christ.²²

20 Martin Luther; Works of Martin Luther, Vol. v. Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Company, n. d., p. 216

21 *Ibid*

22. *Ibid.* p. 217

It is an anomaly of history that it took a millenium for a Martin Luther to proclaim that the popish decrees on this controversy are not just and fair. Such a bold utterance from the mouth of Martin Luther must have made others to consider thoroughly what is the real Nestorian position. According to Luther the fault of Nestorianism is the refusal to accept *Communicatio Idiomatum* ³

Martin Luther's opinion is quoted here not because that he is an authority on christology or the Nestorian controversy, but because his utterance is a clear indication of a sudden change of attitude towards Nestorianism which must have influenced the thinking in the Protestant Churches. When we think that this statement is prior to the "re-discovery" of the *Bazaar of Heracleides*, it becomes even more significant.

Nevertheless, Luther was not consistent. He rejected the title 'Theotokos' but he accepted the Council of Ephesus and Chalcedon²⁴ Though there is no evidence to prove that Nestorius had influenced the Reformers to discard the expression Theotokos, the fact remains that 'Theotokos' has disappeared.

23. *Ibid.* p. 220

24 This inconsistency, however, is true not only of the Western Protestant Churches, but also of the Reformed Syrian Church in South India, known as the Marthoma Syrian Church. This Church at the time of its separation from the Jacobite Syrian Church (now officially known as the Orthodox Syrian Church of India or Indian Orthodox Church) during the last century, discarded the word Theotokos and adopted the phrases for which Nestorius fought a good fight in the first half of the fifth century. This church accepts the first three ecumenical councils of the universal church including the councils of Ephesus where Cyril fought for Theotokos.

The Church of England vainly attempted to escape this dilemma. Due to their claim that there was no break in the continuity of the Church at the time of the Reformation in England in the sixteenth century, they cannot deny this title. The Church of England has therefore accorded explicit recognition to the doctrinal decisions of the first four General Councils, and Bethune Baker assures us that Theotokos is still the standard of English churchman.²⁵ In the last century Dr. Tait, the Archbishop of Canterbury, assured support and protection of the State to any English clergyman who used the title Theotokos, as this title was in "agreement with the doctrine of the Church of England"²⁶ Yet it is never used in the public.²⁷

The invocation "Saint Mary, mother of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, pray for us," though retained in Cranmer's Litany, was omitted in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI.²⁸ This important omission was never corrected in the subsequent versions. Most of the Anglicans, except some high-church men, do not feel the need to use this title neither in the public worship nor in the private devotions. Bethune Baker is content with the use of other titles on the hope that "the faith in the Godhead of her Son is guarded in other ways."²⁹

25 Bethune Baker; *op. cit*; p. 67. footnote. 2

26 *Ibid.*

27 The present writer, who attended Anglican worships in the various Cathedrals and Churches of both "high" and "low" church traditions, never had an opportunity to hear this title which is in "agreement with the doctrine of the Church of England."

28. and 29. Bethune Baker; *op.cit*;p.68

Many Protestants and Anglicans, when asked to explain this inconsistency, take the position that they are not bound by all the decisions of the councils, though officially recognized by them. To be consistent, either the Protestant churches should refuse to accept the Council of Ephesus and its decisions or they should be willing to confess Virgin Mary as *Theotokos*. The first alternate they have not done due to the danger of losing historicity, and the second is an absurd thing to do.

C. THE ANGLICAN & AMERICAN MISSIONS

The “re-discovery” of the Assyrians by the west took place in the last century when Claude James Rich, Resident of the British East India Company in Bagdad, visited the ruins of Nineveh in 1820 A.D. His book published in 1836³⁰ excited the interest of the western world. A.H. Layard who continued the exploration of this area came in contact with the Nestorians and mentioned them in his book.³¹

In 1834 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions started work among the Nestorians and soon after that the Church of England entered the field. After the short visits of Ainsworth (1840), Badger (1842-3), Cutts (1876) Wahl (1881-5), the Church of England decided to establish a permanent mission. In 1886 “Archbishop of Canterbury’s Assyrian Mission” was formed under the special guidance of Archbishop Benson. The first missionaries of this mission, W. H. Brwone and A. J. Maclean, wrote an interesting and informative book on the Assyrian Christ-

30. C.J.Rich; **Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh**, London, 2 vols. 1836

31. **Nineveh and Its Remains**, London, 2vols. 1849

ians,³² Canon Maclean translated their prayer book known as *D'Kdam wadwather*.³³

The Archbishop's Mission during its work (1886-1914) did a lot in interpreting the Anglican understanding of the christology to the Nestorians. They, in turn, explained their view of christology to the Anglican "Apostles", as they called the missionaries. All the members of this mission had a sympathetic understanding of the Nestorians. They were convinced that there was no heresy as Nestorianism.³⁴

In addition to the Anglicans and Presbyterians, other denominations such as Roman Catholics, Russian Orthodox, Norwegian Lutherans etc. came into contact with the Nestorians. The Roman Catholic Church was able to win many converts to their Uniat fold and the Russians received many Nestorians into their church in 1898.³⁵ Some Nestorians

32 Maclean & Browne; **The Catholicos of the East and his people**, London: S. P. C. K., 1892.

33 A. J. Maclean; **East Syrian Daily Offices**, op.cit.

34 The present writer was privileged to interview two of the "survivors" of this Mission and corresponded with the third and the oldest survivor of this Mission. Though it was not easy for them to recall the events of the first decade of this century, they told the present writer that, in spite of their Anglican high churchman-ship, they do not find any heresy among the Assyrians with whom they worked. They strongly believe that the terms can be explained away and the charge of heresy remains baseless.

35. It was a time the Nestorians were being persecuted by the Kurds under the Turkish rule. Naturally they looked to the Tsar of Russia for help.

felt that their affiliation to one of these new Mission did not disqualify them from the membership of the Nestorian church. An interesting example of a Nestorian Archdeacon is quoted at length with great delight by Fortescue.³⁶

As a result of all these attempts, a genuine need was felt among the western Christians to understand the teachings of this church from its own books in order to determine their relationship with this ancient church. Whether sympathetic or critical, a new interest in the Church of the East was revived. The only church that took up the question of inter communion with the East Syrian Church on the official level was the Church of England. Though the policy of the Anglican Mission was criticised strongly by Fortescue, he is charitable enough to comment: "It would be ungenerous to ignore that, in spite of the confusion of their position, they are doing enormous good."³⁷

Two significant results of these western missions, and particularly that of the Anglican mission are i) the discovery of the *Bazaar of Heracleides* and ii) the attempts for intercommunion between the Church of England and the Church of the East.

36. Archdeacon George Melech Nestorius was appointed to work as a missionary of the Norwegian Lutheran Church in 1893. Fortescue thinks of this Archdeacon as "running with the hare and hunting with the hounds." (Fortescue; *op. cit*; p. 121) Any reader will be surprised to hear about a Nestorian priest in charge of a Nestorian Church and at the same time an "active and zealous missionary of the Norwegian Lutheran Church."

37. Fortescue; *op. cit*; p. 126

i) *Discovery of Bazaar of Heracleides*:-

“By a romance of literary preservation”, writes G. L. Prestige, “a Syriac manuscript of his last, long work of self explanation and self defence”³⁸ was rediscovered in Kurdistan. This apology which was written in Greek by Nestorius around 451 A.D. and according to Badger, translated to Syriac around 535 A.D. under Patriarch Paul, survived in a manuscript which was mutilated during the Kurdish massacre of the Nestorians and the burning of the patriarchal Library at Qudshanis³⁹ in 1843 A.D.

Among the translations of this valuable book, only two are available, one in French by Nau,⁴⁰ and the other in English by G.R. Driver.⁴¹ This book was first brought to the notice of scholars in England by J.F. Bethune⁴² Baker through his book *Nestorius and His Teachingse* When F. Loofs delivered lectures at the University of London in 1913 he put much emphasis on this discovery.

Thus *Bazaar of Heracleides* has thrown new light on our understanding on this controversy. Some Roman Catholic Scholars have refused to acceyt the importance of this discovery, as a help towards an adequate understanding of Nestorianism. M. Jugie says that this book is one

38. G. L. Prestige; **Fathers & Heret/cs**; London: S.P.C.K. 1954, p. 125.

39. Kudshanis, Kotchanes, Kochannes, Kotschanes

40. Published in the same year of the Syriac edition (1910)

41. Published in 1925 with Appendix of Leonard Hodgson.

42. The translations of the Syriac passages from **Bazzar** found in this book were made by Dom R. H. Connolly.

of the dullest books that ever came from the hand of man ⁴³ Whether the dullest or not, this book has answered his critics and explained his position, thereby throwing fresh light on this controversy.

The effect of this book on the treatment of Nestorius in contemporary Church history books is evident from the works of authors like, Wigram, Bethune Baker, Vine, etc., This discovery compelled the scholars to find a 'modern view' of Nestorius and his teachings. Almost all the scholars who write on the teachings of Nestorius, whether Protestant or Catholic, cannot but mention this modern view resulted out of the recent discovery of this book. Even *Encyclopædia Britannica* gives a special paragraph for the "modern view" of Nestorianism. The revised editions of encyclopaedias and dictionaries bear a testimony to the significance of this discovery.

ii. THE ATTEMPTS FOR INTER-COMMUNION:—

The Archbishop's Assyrian Mission felt the need to strengthen their relations with the Assyrians. Such a need was felt way back in 1842 when Badger worked among the Nestorians. The question of "heresy" was the only obstacle. At the time of Badger's mission many of the Anglicans had thought that Nestorius taught duality of persons in Christ and denied the divinity. Gradually the members of this mission began to learn that these Assyrians did not hold any heresy attributed to them, and for this reason strongly argued for the establishment of inter-communion with the Assyrians.⁴⁴

43. *Echos d' Orient*, 1911 (xiv) p. 65. Quoted from Fortescue; *op. cit*; p. 70

44. Assyrian Mission Quarterly papers were published by S. P. C. K. in London: The present writer has read all these papers, Reports and correspondence on this mission found in the Lambeth Palace Library, London.

In 1907, William Edward Collins, Bishop of Gibraltar made the first Anglican episcopal visit to the Assyrian Church to meet the Patriarch Mar Benyamin Shimun with a view to discuss the terms of inter-communion. During the interesting interview Bishop Collins explained the Anglican position in regard to the doctrinal requirements if such an inter-communion was to be made possible and frequent. Regarding Assyrians living in an area where there was no church of their denomination there ought to be no difficulty. Bishop Collins writes:

“Not that we should ask them to disavow their Fathers, not that we should ask them to revise their doctrinal books or to make a new creed, for but simply that we should say, ‘This is the Faith as we hold it. Is this what you believe?’⁴⁵

Three years later the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Davidson, following a resolution by the Lambeth Conference of 1908, wrote to the Patriarch of the Church of the East to clarify the doubts regarding the Christology of the Church of the East. After consultation with his bishops, the Patriarch replied on June 13, 1911, accepting the statement of faith propounded to him, (the *Quicunque Vult*) as expressing the belief of the Church of the East. The statement was sent by W. A. Wigram, head of the Archbishop's Assyrian Mission, who in a covering note to the Archbishop remarked.

I venture to hope also that the letter of Mar Shimun to your Grace will suffice to clear this church

45 A. J. Mason; **Life of William Edward Collins, Bishop of Gibraltar**, London: 1912, p. 125

from the charge of heresy that has been levelled against it for so long.⁴⁶

His wish was fulfilled, for the Commission set up by the Lambeth Conference was completely satisfied by the explanation given to the use of the term *Christotokos*. Due to the outbreak of war in 1914 the attempt for inter-communion could not immediately bear fruit, but the following Lambeth Conference,⁴⁷ received the report from the Committee. The report reads:

.....The watchword *Theotokos* is absent from their service books, and in one place is repudiated; on the other hand, its equivalent in other words is several times found, and strong instances of the language known as *communicatio idiomatum* occur.⁴⁸

Even the problem of two *Qnome* did not seem to be an obstacle to this Committee. The Report states:

One phrase which has caused some perplexity, that which asserts that there are in Christ one *Parsopa* (prosopon) two *Qnome*, and two natures. The word *Qnoma* is equivalent of "hypostasis" and if used in the later sense of that word, i. e. as meaning "person," it would imply real Nestorianism: but research had made it plain that it is used in the

46 W. Wigram, letter addressed to Dr. Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury dated August, 1911. (From the archives of Lambeth Palace Library, London)

47. Lambeth Conference of 1920

48. **Lambeth Conferences (1867.1930)**; London: S. P. C. K., 1948, p. 132

earliersense of "hypostasis," namely, "substance," and this makes the phrase, if redundant, at least perfectly orthodox.⁴⁹

This Report strongly recommended that if the "present" authorities of the Church of the East adhered to their statement of June 13, 1911, occasional inter-communion should be established. It is a matter of regret to read in the Report of the following Lambeth Conference, a decade later that "it has not been possible, owing to political and other conditions, to obtain the authoritative statement recommended in 1920." 50

While the Lambeth Conference Report of 1948 expressed the hope that the relations between these two churches may be strengthened,⁵¹ the Report of 1958 mentioned only the political and material aspects of the Assyrian Church.⁵² It dose not mean that the Assyrian church is in disagreement with the doctrinal position explained in 1911 statement. Neither dose it mean that the Anglican church had "second thought." The council of Foreign Relations of the Church of England at Lambeth agrees with this view.⁵³

A word is necessary on the position of the Council of Chalcedon in the Church of the East. Monsigneur Chabot deserves the credit for the information that

49. *Ibid*

50. **Lambeth Conference**, 1930, London: S. P. C. K., n. d. p. 146

51 **Lambeth Conference**; 1948, London: S. P. C. K., 1948, Part II, p. 71

52 **Lambeth Conference**, 1958 London: S. P. C. K., 1958, p. 2. 51

53 Letter to the present writer, dated 3rd November, 1965

Synodicon Orientale included the Council of Chalcedon and “*Tome* of Leo” as officially accepted by the Church of the East. Though he did not print the texts of these documents in his edition, his announcement that these documents were the approved documents of the Church of the East took the scholarly world by surprise⁵⁴ Wigram who took pains to investigate this question, was able to find the manuscript of *Synodicon Orientale* in Mosul and happened to see the formula of Chalcedon in it.⁵⁵ The Church which recognizes the formula of Chalcedon deserves the recognition of the western Churches. The Church of England took a right step in proper direction.

54 The Church of the East officially has not made any statement about this announcement.

55 Wigram informs us that the word ‘Theotokos’ is translated as ‘Mother of Christ’ who is both God and man; and one **Qnoma** is altered as two **Qnome**. The ‘blessed Cyril.’ is changed to ‘accursed Cyril and the phrase ‘to rebuke the folly of Nestorius’ is omitted! (Cf, Wigram; **op. cit**; p. 296)

CONCLUSIONS

A. THE NECESSITY FOR AN OFFICIAL CHANGE IN THE RECOGNITION OF THE COUNCIL OF EPHESUS BY OTHER CHURCHES

A short evaluation of the Council of Ephesus of 431 A. D. would bring us to the conclusion reached by many western scholars quoted in this study, namely that the Council of Ephesus of 431 A. D. was guided mainly by the personal enmity of Cyril against Nestorius, rather than the Christological issue which was evidently the cause according to the 'official version.' Moreover, the help of the Pope given to Cyril resulted in the ultimate victory.

We shall conclude, therefore, unless and until one is able to produce documents, redeeming

- i) the lack of authority in Cyril of Alexandria to convene the Council in spite of the protests of the Imperial Commissioner,
- ii) the absence of right intention in Cyril of Alexandria who presided over it,

iii) the irregularity of the procedure of the Council where the accuser himself was the judge,

vi) the absence of the patriarchs or authorised representatives of Constantinople and Antioch,

v) the incompleteness of the Council as the anticipated joint session of the Council could not take place even after the union of 433 A. D.

vi) the lack of form in the manner of conducting it, and

vii) the lack of integrity of the sayings of Nestorius the validity of the Synod of Ephesus of 431 A. D. as an ecumenical Council of the universal church and its subsequent acceptance by the Church of the East remains doubtful.

The reasons for the refusal of recognition to this Council by the Church of the East are many as shown in the previous chapters. The Church of the East was neither invited nor present in this Council. The Council of Cyril was declared null and void. as per the order of the imperial Commissioner in June 431 A. D. and the repeated orders of the Emperor till the 'political' settlement, and such a settlement did not affect the Persian Church as it was beyond the jurisdiction of Theodosius II. Moreover, the Council of Cyril did not settle any issue, but, on the contrary, created more problems as seen in the Eutychian heresy which was a development of the *mia phusis* thought of Cyril of Alexandria. Apart from the dangerous use of the ambiguous title Theotokos, the Christology of the Church of the East was much similar to that of the Council of Chalcedon, two decades later.

These factors demand a change of outlook by the other churches in regard to the recognition of the Council of Ephesus of 431. Individuals have come out with statements in sympathy with, and in favour of, the stand of the Church of the East. Adolf Harnack and many others challenged the propriety of calling the Council of Ephesus the ecumenical council.¹

The French Roman Catholic theologian, Pere. J. Mahe, who made a fresh examination of the writings of Theodoret, was led to the conclusion that the two Christologies of Antioch and Alexandria, in spite of notable differences, were alike perfectly orthodox.² If Theodoret, who wrote against the twelve anathematisms of Cyril against Nestorius, was considered orthodox in the Council of Chalcedon, Nestorius also would have been considered orthodox if he had been present. What is required is not individual opinions, but official statements by the Churches.

B. THE NECESSITY FOR A 'NESTORIAN CHRISTOLOGY' TODAY

The relevance of Nestorianism for today is the appreciation of the humanity of our Lord. Such an emphasis was necessary at the time of Nestorius because of the influence of the Apollinarians. It is just as relevant today. G. L. Prestige says:

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- 1 Harnack calls Cyril's Council, "this petty assembly" in contrast to what he calls "the legal council under the presidency of the Imperial Commissioner." (Harnack. *op. cit*; p. 187)
 - 2: Pere J. Mahe in the *Revue d histoire ecclesiastique* vol; VII, No. 3, July 1906, quoted from Bethune Baker, *op. cit*; p. 198.

Redemption requires a human response and human appreciation, God Himself supplied a perfect human agent to lead the response and a perfect human instrument to convey the means of appropriation.³

Donald Baille argues that if the human nature of Jesus Christ lacks a human person (a human centre, subject and principle of identity) it is incomplete.⁴ Cyril C. Richardson in his article "*A Preface to Christology*," states that only Nestorians can answer the question "wherein lies the reality of Jesus' temptation? wherein is his human freedom?"⁵ The Christology of the Church of the East is relevant to modern times because of its teaching of perfect human nature. The Nestorian Christ is one who was subject to the conditions of life of the first century, tempted, triumphant and obedient and thereby being a perfect example to mankind of every nation for all times.

The necessity for a 'Nestorian' Christology becomes inevitable when we think of the greatest position ascribed to Virgin Mary in the Roman Catholic Church. The fear expressed by Nestorius against the use of Theotokos should not be ignored at this time when many Christians are convinced of the ever growing magnitude of Mariolatry. It is one of the positive contributions of Nestorius to have exposed the danger of this title.

3. Prestige; *op. cit*; p. 149

4. Donald Baille; *God was in Christ*. New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1948,

5. Cyril C. Richardson; "A Preface to Christology," *Religion in Life*, Vol. XXVII No. 4. p. 508

As far back as our records of history go there was nobody to speak against this title before 428 A. D. though it was used by certain individuals. Perhaps it would have become the standard expression of all Christians if Nestorius did not wage such a crusade against this title. Till the Reformation in the 16th century, the Church of the East, was the only church which shared the concern of Nestorius against the use of Theotokos. Since the Reformation, however many churches share this attitude and thus the position taken by the Church of the East singularly, down through the centuries, is vindicated.

In these days, when the announcements such as, the 'Immaculate Conception of Mary', Assumption of Mary to Heaven, Proclaiming Mary as the Queen of Heaven; are made, the Christians have begun to open their eyes to the dangers of the over-emphasis of the importance of Mary. The opposition to excessive Mariology demonstrated at the Vatican II and the opposition to a separate *Schema* on Mary from many bishops at the Council show that even in the Roman Church, some at least are beginning to see the dangers of the title of Theotokos. Therefore the position explained by Nestorius and consistently maintained by the Church of the East, deserves the appreciation of Christians.

Now many Protestants have recognized that the fears expressed by Nestorius against the use of the title Theotokos were genuine. This justifies the stand that the 'Nestorian' Christology is relevant for today. The 'Image of Nestorius' has changed considerably in the recent years. Bethune Baker proved that Nestorius was not a Nestorian!⁶ Wigram could see the Christological formula of the Church of the East as free from any charge of heresy.⁷

6. Bethune Baker; *op. cit*; p. vii

7. Wigram; *op. cit*; p. 289

F. Loofs, who did not give much importance to the 'transactions of Ephesus' of 431, showed considerable sympathy to Nestorius and his Christology. Against the charge of dualism in Nestorianism, he argued that Nestorius always emphasized the unity of the Person of Christ.⁸

Vine, who felt it impossible to comprehend the meaning of the Christology of *Bazaar of Heracleides*, without a "metaphysical and Christological system", endeavoured to formulate a system by "working backwards and forwards," and claimed to have succeeded in the "evolution of a self consistent metaphysic and Christology."⁹ He reached the conclusion: "There are elements in the thought of Nestorius which provide a helpful mode of approach to the Christological problem."¹⁰ At present many take a position, which was long ago taken by Mosheim even before the 'discovery' of the *Bazaar*, that "Nestorianism" is an error in words rather than in thought."¹¹

The present work has gone a step further. As shown earlier in this essay the Christology of the Church of the East, as well as that of Nestorius himself, is not far from the Chalcedonian formula. Though the words are different the teaching is very much the same. The Christology of Chalcedon is Antiochene in emphasis. In other words, the Chalcedonian formula was the triumph of Nestorian Christology.

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8. F. Loofs; **Nestorius and His Place in the History of Christian Doctrine**, Cambridge: University Press, 1914. p. 126
 9. Vine; **op. cit.**; p. 53
 10. **Ibid**; p. 54
 11. J. L. Mosheim; **An Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern**, (ed) Murdock James; London: William Tegg & Co., 1876 p. 633

C. THE PROSPECTS OF THESE TWO AIMS

“If the broken unity of the Church Catholic is ever to be knit up once more”, Wigram wrote, “it must be by full recognition of these national differences which are national heritages which are so treasured by the nations who hold them that they went into separation rather than surrender them”¹²

As far as the Church of the East is concerned, it will never forsake their hero. The Protestant Churches, which do not accept the title ‘Theotokos’, though used in the Council of Ephesus of 431, ought therefore to say officially whether they regard the approval of the condemnation of Nestorius by Cyril and his followers as a necessary test of orthodoxy.

The Anglican scholars expressed their willingness to accord official recognition to the Church of the East without insisting upon the condemnation of the three Greek doctors, provided they cease to repeat the anathema on Cyril of Alexandria. This may be possible if serious attempts are made from both sides to this effect.

It is extremely unlikely that the Church of the East will cease to mention the names of the three Greek doctors in their Litany. Wigram suggested to use an alternate bidding found in the litany to avoid the names of the Greek doctors,¹³ with the hope that “the change would not be

12. W. A. Wigram; **Doctrinal Position of the Assyrian Church**, London: S. P. C. K., 1908, pp. 63-4

13. The bidding is not an alternate one in the litany as Wigram states.

felt, as the people are all the while occupied in singing an anthem.”¹⁴ Whether the change will be felt or not, the Church of the East will never agree to any ‘change’ in this matter. A change of attitude of other churches in regard to their recognition of the Council of 431 A. D., will pave the way for the reunion of this once far – reaching Church, which is the first major schism of the Christendom.

The prospects of a ‘Nestorian’ Christology are much brighter today than ever before. The Protestant theologians who have begun to emphasise the reality of the suffering of Christ, as an example of his perfect humanity, can play a part in it. The present study has gone further than the previous students of Nestorianism in suggesting without hesitation that *Bazaar of Heracleides* answers most of the charges levelled against Nestorius.

Sympathy towards Nestorius is being shown even in orthodox circles. M. V. Anastos, a Greek orthodox theologian, has shown that the Christology of Nestorius was not very different from that of Cyril. He argues:

..... the Christology of Nestorius, if orthodox should be reconcilable, notwithstanding angry, denials on both sides, with Cyril’s. In truth, it must be admitted, the line which separates them on this, as on all other issues, is either very thin or non-existent.¹⁵

14. Wigram; **Doctrinal Position of the Assyrian Church**, op. cit; pp. 25–26

15. M. V, Anastos; “Nestorius was orthodox”, **Dumbarton Oaks Papers** XIV, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University press, 1962, p. 139. He concludes that Nestorius was the “**dyophysite Par Excellence**” (Ibid. p.140)

The results of the recent Aarhus consultation,¹⁶ in a way, are discouraging. If a unilateral declaration of a Christological compromise is made from the East, the West may have to go its own way and the 'Church of the East' may find more affinity with the West than the East from the Christological point view. If the "eastern ecumenism" is based on Cyril of Alexandria and the Council of Ephesus, 'western ecumenism' will be based on the *Tom* of Leo and the Council of Chalcedon.

As the non-Chalcedonian Churches insist on the reunion with the orthodox churches without recognizing the Council of Chalcedon of 451 A. D., the Church of the East has a legitimate claim to insist on the reunion without recognizing the Council of Ephesus of 431 A. D., presided over by Cyril. On the other hand, if the change of official attitude of other churches towards the Council of Ephesus does not take place, the Church of the East is likely to prefer separation from the rest of the Christendom for ever.

Even Cyril treated the decision of the Council of 431 with such a scant respect that within two years he swept that decision absolutely on one side, and made, on his own authority, a compromise with his rivals. Is it possible for the churches to follow the example of Cyril and to re-think the importance they have attached to this as the third ecumenical council—an idea, which perhaps did not occur even to Cyril.¹⁷

D. A FINAL WORD

The present writer has claimed this work to be an impartial study of the Council of Ephesus. Impartiality, however, does not consist in refusing to form any opinion or in a futile concealment of the dangers of the thought of the man concerned, but in treating them scientifically and

16. See Appendix B.

17 Wigram; Doctrinal Position of..... op. cit; p. 35.

sincerely and attempting to discover objectively the thought in the historical background in which it was developed.

This, then, the present writer hopes to have achieved in the above study. Men have thought about all the conceivable forms of the conception of the union of the divine and human natures of Christ. How exactly has this union taken place? It is open to conjectures. To a certain extent, it is beyond human speculation.

There was a period when these terms were only "in the making." Such a beginning, though unfortunate, was necessary for an adequate understanding. "Nestorianism" was necessary to prevent any notion of deification of human nature as an entity, thereby losing sight of the historical Christ. As Bethune Baker warns us the teachings against which Nestorius protested "would have made of the Saviour of men a person not really human, and Redemption a magical, instantaneous, rather than an ethical, gradual, process."¹⁸

The 're-discovery' of the *Bazaar* was a "dispensation of God, in an age in which the doctrine of the Incarnation is exposed to dangers, from opponents and defenders alike which are at least as dissolvent as those against which he cried unheard."¹⁹ Modern thought can best profit from this controversy by attempting a synthesis of the apparently opposed but really complementary views.

The Christology of the Church of the East, i. e., One Person, two *Qnome* and two *Kyane*, when it is translated as one Person, two concrete natures and two abstract natures, is perfectly orthodox. As A. R. Vine has pleaded we should give Nestorius the benefit of doubt with regard to the technical terms. If we attempt to understand exactly how Godhead and manhood are united in the one Person of Jesus Christ, we reach the inevitable conclusion that the problem of Christology is insoluble.

18. Bethune Baker; *op. cit*; p. 207

19. *Ibid*; p. 196

APPENDIX-A

ANATHEMATISMS & COUNTER-ANATHEMATISMS

I

If any one will not confess that the Emmanuel is very God, and that there the Holy Virgin is the mother of God (*Theotokos*), in as much as in the flesh she bore the Word of God made flesh (as it is written, "The Word was made flesh"); let him be anathema.¹

Nestorius: If anyone says that the Emmanuel is true God, and not rather *God with us*, that is, that he has united himself to a like nature with ours, which he assumed from the Virgin Mary, and dwelt in it; and if anyone calls Mary mother of God the Word, and not rather mother of him who is Emmanuel; and if he maintains that God the Word has *changed* himself into the flesh, which he only assumed in order to make his Godhead visible, and to be found in form as a man, let him be anathema.

1. The texts of the anathematisms and Counter anathematisms are quoted from H. R. Percival (ed); *opcit.*

As the discussion on the title *Theotokos* taken up earlier it is not necessary to deal with this anathema in detail. However, it can be noted that Cyril gave his attention to this title in his anathema, while this issue was mentioned only at the end in the Synodal letter, i. e., third letter of Cyril to Nestorius. Hefele blames Cyril for putting "the contested term *Theotokos* aggressively to the front,"²

II

If any one shall not confess that the Word of God the Father is united hypostatically to flesh, and with that flesh of his own, he is one only Christ both God and man at the same time: let him be anathema.

Nestorius: if anyone asserts that, at the union of the Logos with the flesh, the divine Essence moved from one place to another: or says that the flesh is capable of receiving the divine nature, and that it has been partially united with the flesh; or ascribes to the flesh, by reason of its reception of God, an extension to the infinite and boundless, and says that God and man are one and the same in nature, let him be anathema.

This anathema created a problem concerning the nature of the union. Here, the phraseology of Cyril was not clear to the Antiochenes. Referring to this anathema, Theodoret writes: But we are wholly ignorant of the phrase "hypostatic union", which is strange and foreign to divine scripture and to the Fathers. Does Cyril mean by it a mixture of flesh and Godhead?³ The problem here, however is due to the difference of meaning given to the word "hypostasis." Theodoret takes it in the sense of *substantia*, while Cyril was using it in the sense of *persona*.

2. Hefele; *op. cit*; p. 228

3. Bindley; *op. cit*; p. 126

III

If anyone shall after the (hypostatic) union divide the hypostases in the one Christ, joining them by that connexion alone, which happens according to worthiness, or even authority and power, and not rather by a coming together (*sunodo*), which is made by natural union (*henosin phusiken*): let him be anathema.

Nestorius: if anyone says that Christ, who is also Emmanuel, is one, not (merely) in consequence of *connection* but (also) in *nature*, and does not acknowledge the connection (*συναφή*) of the two natures, that of the Logos and of the assumed manhood, in one Son, as still continuing without *mingling*; let him be anathema.

This anathema, according to Cyril's point of view denounces the fundamental error of Theodore, Nestorius and others of the Antiochene school, viz., dividing Christ into two persons. But, on the other hand, Theodoret of Cyrus, referring to the words of St. Paul that the 'self-emptying was a voluntary act,'⁴ writes:

For whatever Cyril may say to the contrary, the hypostases must be divided, and as his use here of the plural *hypostases* shows, he himself knows that each nature is perfect and that both come together into the same. So while we confess the one *Prosopon*, the one son and the one Christ, it is not absurd – nay, it is necessary – to hold that the divided natures are two.⁵

4. Philippians; 2: 7

5. Bindley; *op. cit.* p. 127

I V

If anyone shall divide between two persons or subsistences those expressions (*phorās*) which are contained in the Evangelical and Apostolic writings, or which have been said concerning Christ by the Saints, or by himself, and shall apply some to him as to a man separate from the Word of God, and shall apply others to the only Word of God the Father, on the ground that they are fit to be applied to God: let him be anathema.

Nestorius: If any one assigns the expressions of the Gospels, and Apostolic letters, which refer to the two natures of Christ, to one only of those natures, and even ascribes suffering to the divine Word, both in the flesh and in the Godhead: let him be anathema.

The Antiochene christology is against any notion of the confusion of Godhead and Manhood. Cyril used *prosopon* synonymously with *hupostasis* for 'Person.' Perhaps when the 'Formulary of Reunion' was drafted in 433 A. D., this anathema was in their mind, at the time of conclusion. The last sentence of this document reads:

With regard to the evangelic and Apostoloic sayings concerning the Lord, we know that theologians make some common, as relating to One Person, and distinguish others, as relating to two Natures interpreting the God – befitting ones of the Godhead of Christ, and the lowly ones of His Humanity.⁶

6. *Ibid*; p. 221

V

If anyone shall dare to say that the Christ is a *Theophorus* (that is, God –bearing) man and not rather that he is very God, as an only Son through nature, because “the Word was made flesh,” and “hath a share in flesh and blood as we do;” Let him be anathema.

Nestorius: If any one ventures to say that, even after the assumption of human nature, there is only one Son of God, namely, he who is so in nature (*naturaliter filius = Logos*), while he (since the assumption of the flesh) is certainly Emmanuel; let him be anathema.

*Theophoros Anthrops*⁷ is called a Nestorian phrase. It cannot be denied, however, that Basil the Great employed a similar phrase when he wrote *He theophoros sarax*.⁸ According to Cyril, *Theophoros* might be applied to any saint in whom God dwells. At any rate it was not the meaning given by the Antiochenes when they used this in reference to Christ. They appeal to St. Paul⁹ and boldly proclaim that by *theophoros anthropos* they do not mean that Christ is endowed with only some particular divine grace as in the matter of a prophet, but with all the Godhead of the Son.

VI

If anyone shall dare to say that the Word of God the Father is the God of Christ or the Lord of Christ, and shall not rather confess he has at the same time both God and Man, since according to the Scriptures, “The Word was made flesh”: let him be anathema.

7. God – bearing man

8. The God – bearing flesh

9. Colossians 11:8, 9

Nestorius: If anyone, after the Incarnation calls another than Christ the Word, and ventures to say that the form of a servant is equally with the Word of God, without beginning and uncreated, and not rather that it is made by him as its natural Lord and Creator and God, and that he has promised to raise it again in the words: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up again;" let him be anathema.

Cyril is struggling to charge Nestorius with dualism ¹⁰ which he denies. Nestorius, on the other hand, tried to show that Cyril is Apollinarian, which Cyril rejects.

VII

If anyone shall say that Jesus as man is only energized by the Word of God, and that the glory of the only-begotten is attributed to him as something not properly his: let him be anathema.

Nestorius: If anyone says that the man who was formed of the Virgin is the *only begotten*, who was born from the bosom of the Father, before the morning star was (Ps. cix:3), and does not rather confess that he has obtained the designation of *Only-begotten* on account of his connection with him who in nature is the only-begotten of the Father; and besides. If anyone calls another than the Emmanuel Christ; let him be anathema.

The terms create the problem. As the man's nature is mortal, it cannot raise itself. It is made immortal or energised by the divine Logos, the giver of life.

10. The discussion on the charge of dualism has been taken up earlier in this essay.

VIII

If anyone shall dare to say that the assumed man (*Analephenta*) ought to be worshipped together with God the Word, and glorified together with him, and recognized together with him as God. and yet as two different things, the one with the other (for this "Together with" is added (i. e., by the Nestorians) to convey this meaning); and shall not rather with one adoration worship the Emmanuel and pay to him one glorification, as (it is written) "The Word was made flesh": let him be anathema.

Nestorius: If anyone says that the form of a servant should, for its own sake, that is, in reference to its own nature, be revered, and that it is the ruler of all things, and not rather that (merely) on account of its connection with the holy and in itself universally – ruling nature of the Only-begotten, it is to be revered, let him be anathema.

This anathema condemns anyone who asserts that the co-worship is due to a man assumed by God the Word. This anathema betrays the later Eutychian heresy, already taking shape in the thought of Cyril.

IX

If any man shall say that the one Lord Jesus Christ was glorified by the Holy Ghost, so that he used through him a power not his own and from him received power against unclean spirits and power to work miracles before men and shall not rather confess that it was his own spirit through which he worked these divine signs, let him be anathema.

Nestorius: If anyone says that the form of a servant is of like nature with the Holy Ghost, and not rather that it

owes its union with the Word which has existed since the conception, to his meditation, by which it works miraculous healings among men, and possesses the power of expelling demons; let him be anathema.

The problem of the Double Procession is seen here. The Antiochenes could not accept that the Spirit proceeded from the Father as well as from the Son.

X

Whosoever shall say that it is not the divine Word himself, when he was made flesh and had become man as we are, but another than he, a man born of a woman, yet different from him (*hidikos Anthropon*), who is become our Great High Priest and Apostle; or if any man shall say that he offered himself in sacrifice for himself and not rather for us, whereas, being without sin, he had no need of offering or sacrifice: let him be anathema.

Nestorius: If any one maintains that the Word, who is from the beginning, has become the high priest and apostle of our confession, and has offered himself for us, and does not rather say that it is the work of Emmanuel to be an apostle, and if any one such a manner divides the sacrifice between him who united (the Word) and him who was united (the manhood) referring it to a common sonship, that is, not giving to God that which is God's, and to man that which is man's; let him be anathema.

Cyril is attacking the view that Christ is an advancement of a man towards moral union with the Word. It should be clear, however, that Nestorius did not hold such view. He held his main proposition that there were two unconfused natures in Jesus Christ, our High Priest.

XI

Whosoever shall not confess that the flesh of the Lord giveth life and that it pertains to the Word of God the Father as his very own, but shall pretend that it belongs to another person who is united to him (i. e., the Word) only according to honour, and who has served as a dwelling for the divinity; and shall not rather confess, as we say: that the flesh giveth life because it is that of the Word who giveth life to all: let him be anathema.

Nestorius: If any one maintains that the Flesh which is united with God the Word is by the power of its own nature life-giving, whereas the Lord himself says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (St. John VI:64), let him be anathema. (He adds, "God is a Spirit" (St. John IV:24). If, then, any one maintains that God the Logos has in a carnal manner, in his substance, become flesh, and persists in this with reference to the Lord Christ; who himself after his resurrection said to his disciples, "Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having" (St. Luke XXIV:39); let him be anathema.

Cyril is suspected of Apollinarianism from the language of this anathema. Cyril defends his statement explaining that it is meant to prevent Nestorius attributing it to a separate human person.

XII

Whosoever shall not recognise that the Word of God suffered in the flesh, that he was crucified in the flesh, and that likewise in that same flesh he tasted death and that he

is become the first-begotten of the dead, for, as he is God, he is the life and it is he that giveth life: let him be anathema.

Nestorius: If any one, is confessing the sufferings of the flesh, ascribes these also to the Word of God as to the flesh in which he appeared, and thus does not distinguish the dignity of the natures; let him be anathema.

Cyril is accused of Patripassionism and even Arianism. When Cyril states that "the Word of God suffered," the Antiochenes take it to mean almost the same as saying "God suffered." The argument of Theodoret was this that "The passible only can suffer; the impassible is above passion."¹¹

11. Bindley; *op. cit*; p. 137

APPENDIX-B

THE AARHUS CONSULTATION

Among the decisions taken by the Heads of the "United Orthodox Churches", at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,¹ the following is the most significant:

Concerning the Christological controversy which caused the division, we hope that common studies in a spirit of mutual understanding can shed light on our understanding of each other's positions. So we decide that we should institute formally a fresh study of the Christological doctrine in its historical setting to be undertaken by our scholars taking into account the earlier studies on this subject as well as the informal consultations held in connection with the meetings of the World Council of Churches.²

1. It was held during January 15-21, 1965

2. *Ecumenical Review*, Vol. xvii. No. 2. April 1965; p. 187

The reference is to the consultation which preceded the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches at Aarhus, Denmark in August, 1964. The unanimous declaration of the participants who were from both Monophysites and orthodox Churches reads:

Our inherited misunderstandings have begun to clear up. We recognize in each other the one orthodox faith of the Church. Fifteen centuries of alienation have not led us astray from the faith of our Fathers.³

This statement proves how the so-called Monophysites are trying to prove their orthodoxy. About the various terminologies the statement reads:

Though the different terminologies used by each side, we saw teaching of Eutyches as well as Nestorius; the acceptance or non-acceptance of Chalcedon does not entail the acceptance of either heresy.⁴

The statement fully takes into the consideration the non-theological factors involved in these Christological controversies. The statement continues:

The significant role of political, sociological and cultural factors in creating tension between factions in the past should be recognized and studied together. They should not, however, continue to divide us.⁵

3. **Herder Correspondence**, Vol. 2. No. 5, May, 1965. p. 137

4. & 5 *Ibid* p. 137

One of the participants of the Aarhus consultation, in a personal letter to the present writer, tells that there was no occasion to take up the point of Nestorianism there.⁶ After reading the various papers of this consultation by theologians of both Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian tradition, the present writer gets the impression that the understanding of the eastern theologians about the Chalcedonian Council and the formula of two natures is different from the understanding of the West. The Western scholars—as well as the Western Church officially—understood the Chalcedonian formula in the light of the *tome* of Leo. But these eastern theologians are making a plea to understand the Chalcedonian formula in the light of Cyril of Alexandria rather than the *Tome* of Leo. The eastern scholars think that it is the only way to redeem the Chalcedonian formula from the influence of Nestorianism!

J. N. Kamiris, reading his paper in this consultation, states that ‘Nestorians imagine or confess “that the hypostases are separate after the indivisible union” and thus hold that there are “two Sons.”’⁷ In another paper read in the same consultation, Dr. Khalla expressed his surprise at the action taken by the Greek Church accepting “in two natures” which has no Greek tradition. The traditional phrase of the Greek fathers, he argues, is “of two natures.” He further observes, “Leo had little comprehension of the theological issue behind the two prepositions”⁸

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6. Letter from V. C. Samuel to the present writer dated 27 August, 1965, Addis Ababa.
 7. J. N. Karmiris; “Unification on the Basis of Cyril’s Formula”, **The Greek Orthodox Theological Review**, vol. x. No. 2, Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Theological School Press, 1965 (eds) Romanides, Varghese & Nissioties, p. 65.
 8. Khella; *op. cit*; p. 81

The non-Chalcedonians accept only *ek duo phuseon* (from two natures) and not *en duo phusesi* (in two natures) after the union. Whether Pope Leo understood "the issue behind the two prepositions or not, the Roman church has consistently maintained the *Tome* of Leo as a standard document on this christological issue. The christological formula of the Church of the East is considered orthodox by certain Western theologians because of its closeness in thought with the *Tome* of Leo.

The trend in the East is now extremely unfavourable to the celebrated *Tome* of Leo. V. C. Samuel states that the Council of Chalcedon committed a great error by declaring the *Tome* of Leo a document of Faith. The *Tome* states, "Each nature performs what is proper to the Word, and the flesh carrying out what is proper to the flesh." He concludes that "a teacher of this kind does not affirm Christ's personal unity, but regards the natures as two persons."⁹

The Aarhus consultation emphasised too much the authority of Cyril and neglected *Tome* of Leo or the western scholars who find the *Tome* of Leo as an important document on Christology. Professor Florovsky of Princeton University, however, raised the question during this consultation regarding the over-emphasis on the 'eastern ecumenism'. He stated: "We cannot afford to forget the West – and the *Tome* of LeoI have also doubts about agreement on the basis of a one - sided Cyrillian formula."¹⁰

The "One sided Cyrillian formula" is likely to be the reunion formula, if and when, the non - Chalcedonian Chu-

9. V. C. Samuel; **op. cit**; p. 50

10. Florovsky; Discussion, G. O. T. R., **op. cit**; p. 80

rites are going to make a theological compromise with the Orthodox Churches. V. C. Samuel had earlier argued that the Chalcedonian definition of Faith came to adopt the phrase 'in two natures' very much against the wish of a great bloc of Eastern bishops. This was done, as far as we have evidence, not subsequent to a theological discussion of the issues, but on the logic that the bishop of Rome had to be respected more than a condemned Dioscorus, that the former had employed the phrase in the *Tome*, and that therefore it had to be accepted.¹¹

This "eastern ecumenism" if it develops into greater proportion, will have its effects on the general understanding of Nestorianism. As the Aarhus consultation was only an unofficial "summit" of the theologians of both these sides, it is too early to predict its results. At any rate, the official Monophysite gathering at Addis Ababa made special reference to this Aarhus consultation. Moreover, the fact that the Aarhus consultation has included very eminent scholars of both sides, helps us to understand not only the importance of their thinking, but also the attitude that is likely to be taken by the Monophysites and Orthodox Churches in regard to the estimate of *Tome* of Leo and the formula of "two natures."

The relevance of the Aarhus consultation to the present study is in the "policy" of the eastern Churches (Monophysite and Orthodox) concerning the formula of "two natures." If the Orthodox Churches are going back to the pre-Chalcedonian days to accept *Mia physis Seserkomene* (One Incarnate Nature) of Cyril of Alexandria, then a compromise of the Christology of the Church of the East, seems to be impossible.

11. Samuel; "A Brief Historical Survey of the Council of Chalcedon" *Indian Journal of Theology* Vol. x. No. 4 1961, p.150

APPENDIX-C

CHRONOLOGY OF THE CONTROVERSY

- | | | |
|-----|--------------|---|
| 428 | April | Nestorius becomes Patriarch of Constantinople. |
| | November | Anastasius preaches against Theotokos |
| | Christmasday | Nestorius begins a course of sermons.
Protest of Eusebius (afterwards bishop of Dorylaeum) |
| 429 | Lady day | Proclus' sermon replied to by Nestorius |
| | Eastertide | Nestorius preaches three sermons i. reply to Proclus
Cyril sends his encyclical <i>Ad Monachos Aegypti</i> . Photius replies to it
Cyril stirs up accusers against Nestorius.
Caelestine of Rome makes inquiries.
Letters from Nestorius reach Caelestine |
| | June | Cyril's first letter to Nestorius
Nestorius replies peacefully
Basil and his monks petition Theodosius II against Nestorius, and ask for an Oecumenical Council. |

430

Lent
April

Cyril's second letter to Nestorius

Nestorius replies to Cyril

Cyril's letter to Caelestine, sent by Poseidonius

Cyril makes a fruitless effort to win over Acacius of Beroea.

August

Nestorius is condemned at Rome.

Cyril writes to John of Antioch and Juvenal of Jerusalem.

November

Theodosius II and Valentinian III summon a General Council to meet at Ephesus at Pentecost 431.

A Council was held at Alexandria

Cyril wrote third letter with the twelve Anathematisms appended.

November 7

Nestorius receives Cyril's third letter and Caelestine's sentence of excommunication

December
13 & 14

Nestorius preaches two sermons and sends them to Cyril with counter anathematisms.

431

Cassian and Marius Mercator wrote against Nestorius.

Cyril writes to Caelestine requesting advice for further procedure, if Nestorius recants.

May 7

Caelestine replies to Cyril asking him to do whatever he can to win Nestorius back.

June 7

Whitsunday

" 12

Cyril of Alexandria as well as Nestorius arrived at Ephesus with their adherents.

" 21

Cyril receives letter from John of Ant-

- ioch informing him about his delay in arrival etc.
- " 22 Cyril convenes the first session of the council ignoring the protests of Candidian, Imperial Commissioner.
- " 26 Arrival of John of Antioch with the eastern bishops and holding of the Council in the presence of Candidian. Candidian sends report to the Emperor.
- " 29 An Imperial Rescript arrives in which Cyril is rebuked for his haste.
- July 10 Celestine's legates arrive
Session II
- " 11 Session III. Philip, the Roman legate, announces the Pope's assent to the sentence passed on Nestorius.
- " 16 Session IV. John of Antioch and his supporters arrive
- " 17 Session V. John of Antioch sends a message refusing to have anything with Cyril.
- " 21 Session VI
- " 31 Session VII
- August Count John, the Imperial Commissioner, arrives at Ephesus. Nestorius, Cyril and Memnon were put under house arrest.
- September 11 Theodosius II receives eight delegates from each side at Chalcedon. Theodosius II dissolved the assembly. Nestorius retired to his monastery. Maximian succeeded Nestorius.
- October 30 Cyril arrives in Alexandria

- 432 January 27 Celestine dies, and is succeeded by Sixtus III.
- April Aristolaus was sent by the Emperor with letters for a reconciliation.
- Autumn Paul of Emesa was sent to Alexandria as the Antiochene Mediator
- Winter Paul of Emesa reaches Alexandria.
- December 18 Paul is received into communion at Alexandria
- Christmas Day Aristolaus preached in Alexandria
- 433 Aristolaus and Paul return to Antioch and persuade John to agree.
John announces his decision for reconciliation
Cyril replies it by his famous Epistle. *Laetentur Coeli*. The question of 12 anathematisms is left unmentioned by both sides.
- 434 Death of Maximian, Proclus becomes bishop of the Constantinople.
An Imperial Rescript Orders the bishops of the East to give up their resistance.
- 435 The *Tome* of Proclus is approved by both Cyril and John.
- April Alexander of Hierapolis and seventeen other bishops were banished to the Egyptian mines.
- August Edict of Theodosius proscribing the writings of Nestorius and meetings of his followers.
- 451 Nestorius dies in exile in Egypt.

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